

## ALLONDALE PRIORY.

BY J. F. OTIS.

## CHAPTER I.

A YOUNG man of high birth and large fortune was startled, one day, in the midst of a season of great gayety, by a communication from the steward of one of his largest estates, stating the impossibility of remitting the sums required from thence. Various reasons were given, plausible, but not satisfactory; and he had barely time to arrive at the conclusion that "something was rotten in the state of Denmark," before he received another letter from one of his well-wishing friends, which might have been an anonymous one for anything he knew of the signature. John Powell, however, stated, in very plain terms, that affairs were sadly wrong in Northumberland; that the steward had grown rich, while all the tenants were growing very poor; and that it would be the greatest blessing if "the master" would make a journey down, just to see, with his own eyes, how things were going.

There were many cogent reasons for the adoption of the advice contained in this homely letter. It was the end of the London season; or, at least, of the term of a possible residence there by an exclusive; and if a watering-place, or a sojourn at a country-seat were resorted to, either was equally expensive, and money, alas! was scarce. The weather was beautiful, and it would be something new to ramble amid the wilds of Northumberland; a place hitherto overlooked by tourists for the more popular beauties of the lakes. The Tyne, the Till, and the Tweed, were rivers so famous in song, that it was almost heresy in taste not to have seen them; and still worse, that his ancestral domains should never have been visited. All this was now

to be redressed; so, bidding adieu to bright eyes that streamed with tears, the young possessor of many estates took but a single domestic, and, traveling post, soon found himself in one of the most romantic districts of truly romantic Northumberland.

His own affairs were the first thought of the dispirited traveler; they were all worse than he could possibly have expected, and so involved in knavish chicanery, that redemption from the wide-spreading ruin seemed almost a hopeless task. Happily, he had arrived at a moment quite unexpected by the intriguing steward, and was, by this means, able to detect more of his villainy than ever would have otherwise come to light. Happily, also, honest John Powell was easily found; just so rich as to care for no one, and just so sturdy as to acknowledge his letter without a moment's hesitation; extending his information to subjects of the utmost importance; and, from his local knowledge of the country, having it in his power to give much useful advice.

Some few evils were redressed at the moment. The steward was obliged to give his accounts into the hands of a lawyer of high reputation in the neighborhood, who was henceforth to transact all the business of the estate; and "the master" was so well pleased with the place and its scenery, that he resolved upon spending a large portion of every year in the midst of these unsophisticated beings, for the purpose of attending to their comforts and well-doing. It was not until as much was done as was possible on the instant, that this young gentleman thought himself at liberty to explore the retired parts of the romantic district; and it was not until he found himself among the secluded tarns

or lakes, or amid the wild solitude of the hills—like the natives call their mountains—that he began to reflect deeply on the nature of his past life, or attach so much importance to the future. An orphan almost from his birth, his guardians had attended scrupulously to his property and to his academic hours. On his arriving at a legal majority, he had traveled in the south of Europe with more benefit than many others do; for he had not merely galloped through Italy, or, when in the principal cities of other states, rushed into dissipation with numbers of his countrymen. He had, it is true, been more prodigal of his money than of his time; but he had avoided the gaming-table and the destructive haunts of vicious indulgence. Still, he had done no good. The vast sums of ready money that his coming of age had put into his hands—sums accumulating during his long minority—how had he spent them? He was afraid to pursue the subject too far. And the cherished of his heart—she who seemed to live but in his presence—would she have loved him out of the whirl of dissipation into which he plunged for her sake? Would she be content to live in these sublime solitudes because they were not Italy, but simply Northumberland? Would she still love him with a diminished income? He could not look the subject steadily in the face, but turned to the dim, gleaming tarn, the blue mountain, the majestic forest, and hoped that her exquisite taste would be charmed with their sublimity, and that she would delight to join him in the new luxury—of doing good. Time alone would disclose how all this might be answered. After seeing all that has been rendered prominent by historical or poetic association, the traveler turned his steps towards the south of England; journeying slowly, well-mounted—for the sake of occasionally diverging—and still accompanied by his trusty domestic.

It was on the evening of a fine day in August, that the two horsemen had reached one of those picturesque hamlets found in most counties, especially in the north, when a small dog, barking furiously, sprang over a cottage fence, and startled the foremost horse so as instantly to throw his rider with considerable force. The servant alighted, and found, to his infinite consternation, that a leg was broken by the fall. A woman came out of the cottage, who, to his great joy, spoke a language to be understood—a circumstance not always certain among the Northumbrian peasantry. When she learned the extent of the misfortune, she begged him to suffer her to place pillows under the gentleman's head, but by no means to move him farther till proper aid could be obtained; and she immediately dispatched a boy for the rector of the village, whose low, white house was seen on a swelling lawn, sheltered by a grove at a short distance.

"Our good Mr. Egremont," said the woman, "knows better than we do what is right on such an occasion. It is many miles to the doctor's, but I hope we shall be able to prevent any mischief coming from this sad accident."

Martin, in his impatience, went a few steps to meet a man of very dignified appearance, to tell him that his master, Mr. Eden, had an estate not many miles distant from thence, and to beg his advice and assistance. Mr. Egremont smiled at the idea of its being necessary for him to be told who it was in order to insure his ready aid—a proof, to the London-bred Martin, that he was not very conversant in the ways of the world.

It was not the work of many minutes to cut off the tight boot, and to ascertain that it was only a simple fracture; which, with good Mrs. Fuller's assistance, it was possible to reduce and bind up before any attempts were made to alter the position of the patient. The next thing was to dispatch Martin on the fleetest horse for a surgeon. Before he mounted, he offered to put a purse into Mr. Egremont's hand; but he was assured it was not needed, as he would, on his return, find his master carefully attended at the rectory. Four stout men were soon found; and a door, with additional pillows and blankets, formed the means of careful removal to one of the simple parlors of the low-roofed cottage, where Mr. Egremont resolved no other step should be taken until medical aid arrived. Gently as all the movements were made, Mr. Eden had a slight swoon; from which, when he partially recovered, he had the dreamy sensation of bright forms flitting about his temporary couch, and soft tones ringing in his ears. On his perfect recovery, however, only the tall form of Mr. Egremont and the more simple figure of the female peasant, were near him.

When the surgeon arrived, he pronounced everything to have been done with the utmost propriety, and that nothing more was needed now but to keep off fever. This did not seem to be quite so easy. There was evidently a tendency to irritability, with the apparent contradiction of great depression. After some professional hesitation, the man of science was induced to stay with his patient till this could be allayed. Mr. Eden was carefully removed to an adjoining room, and kept for many days under the strictest regimen, with the good nursing of Mrs. Fuller.

In the silence and seclusion of this neatest of all cottages, Mr. Eden had ample time to pursue his former reflections. With the sufferings of some of his tenants full on his mind, he again asked himself for what purpose he had hitherto existed. For the benefit of others? Certainly not; since his own people, who had the strongest claims on him, had been robbed and oppressed without his interference. For his own happiness or comfort? No; for, to mention only his property, it had been wasted and was much diminished. What might be the result of all this, no one could tell. He had time to plan and to resolve, and he did not neglect the opportunity.

The hours of tedium were relieved by occasional visits from Mr. Egremont, and soon the window curtains were permitted to be drawn aside, that nature, in her trim habit, might cheer the sight. Mr. Eden

did not expect so much taste in the arrangement of a garden in this remote district. What was called a cottage ornée in the south of England, had often disgusted him by its pretensions, and always offended him by its incongruity. He thought himself quite secure here of seeing neither tabourets, ottomans, or chaise lounges, the first with coats of arms worked on worsted, and the others with draperies suited to a palace. Surely here would not be the table spread with satin cushions, watch-cases, and bad miniatures, or motre clocks, and all the nick-nackeries of little minds. He was somewhat alarmed when he heard a few notes of music swelling and dying away with the breeze. He hoped it was some itinerant, for he would not have pretension of any kind amid so much simplicity; it would absolutely destroy the whole character of the place. Again he heard it in the remote distance, but he laughed at the fancy that could conjure up strains impossible to be found in a hamlet of the very wildest county in England, where the dialect was so much mixed up with Scotticisms as to make it almost unintelligible. "But how is it," thought he, "that Mr. Egremont speaks such pure English? No doubt from his classical education."

In a few days, he was certain that music was borne on the airs of heaven; and, moreover, it was Italian music—such as he had heard when the daughters of a duchess condescended and even vied for the honor of performing for the amusement of crowded rooms, in a way that had pained and disgusted him. But there were no duchesses here or their daughters. From whence, then, such strains? He questioned the nurse, but she was very busy at that moment, and he obtained no answer. The next time Mr. Egremont visited him, he asked smilingly if fairies haunted that remote place, for that he had heard a few notes of music that might be deemed aerial. Mr. Egremont said he was glad to see him smile, but promised their rude notes should not annoy him again. Mr. Eden protested against this, and begged to know who were the musicians.

"My daughters amuse themselves sometimes," said Mr. Egremont; "but I really thought we had taken every precaution against the sounds reaching you."

"I shall be sorry if I am any restraint to your family in any way. I wish I might be permitted to join you, even if it should be on a couch."

"I have obtained leave from the doctor for you to be removed into the next room, where you will, at least, have books to amuse you."

This, Mr. Eden found, was a not very small library; and here, after some little time, the small family met to take their meals. On his first introduction to two girls about the age of eighteen and nineteen, Mr. Eden only observed their extreme simplicity of dress, and a certain dignified, retiring manner, much like that of their father. His mind being so much pre-occupied, he did not ask himself whether they were handsome, elegant, or accomplished; he did not even ask them to play, nor did

they offer to do so; but on learning, by accident, that they abstained from music lest they should annoy or fatigue him, he assured Mr. Egremont that, if any restrictions were laid on the family by his remaining, he would, at whatever risk, immediately remove to an inn. At certain hours from this time, he heard, in another room, sounds of the sweetest and most scientific description, evidently in the way of a daily habit.

Much conversation now passed between the two gentlemen; and Mr. Eden heard that, when this good rector came first into the parish, he found a brutalized, depressed set of inhabitants, and that it had been his constant care to raise as well as reform them.

"I could not do so much," said Mr. Egremont, "but for the assistance of my daughters. It is astonishing how soon a female will win her way into a heart that seems inaccessible."

"Alas!" cried Mr. Eden, thinking of his own tenantry, "what can such delicate young women do among the rude peasants of these hamlets?"

"When you are better, you shall see. Mine are good girls—pardon the vanity of a father—they love their duties, and persevere faithfully in them."

The Greek and Arabic of which these gentlemen sometimes spoke, was much easier to Mr. Eden than the comprehension how two such girls, breathing melody and unconsciously exhibiting grace in every movement, could walk into such hovels as he had seen, and there even direct a change to be made. Had he known how often they lent a helping hand to improvement, and what their uniform example effected, he would have been still more bewildered.

"I beg you to forgive my skepticism," said he; "but when I anxiously looked to the minister and his family on my own estate, I found him immersed in sloth—a good man, certainly, but a most inefficient one—his wife ignorant of everything but dress, the management of her house and her table. The daughters were still worse than their mother. I used to find them full-dressed, reading novels, immediately after breakfast. They all seemed to think the poorer farmers and the industrious cottagers as a different race of beings from themselves, and unworthy notice or even a thought."

"Ah," said Mr. Egremont, "such a family is ruin in any parish. We feel the ill effects of having some such neighbors; but we vigorously strive to counteract the evil."

An unusual noise was at this moment heard in the hall.

"And here comes one as a specimen. I declare to you, Mr. Eden, we should not admit this young lady and her two great dogs into our quiet cottage, were it not for the sake of her worthy uncle, and the hope that we are curing her of some of her folly."

Mr. Egremont then left the room; and a voice—not a very gentle one—was heard.

"Bevis, keep on the mat! Oscar, lie down! You wretches, you dirty the whole floor! If you are not more quiet I will not take you out again!"

Bevis, do not tear Mr. Egremont to pieces! Keep down, will you! Ah, you know, my dear sir, he is so glad to see you! And to think of his being able to reach your shoulders!"

The door of a room next to the library now admitted this lady to the presence of the Misses Egremont; and she immediately exclaimed—

"And so, you have got such a handsome, interesting——"

"Hush! hush!" came instantly from more voices than one; and, after some commonplace observations, amidst the noise of the riotous dogs, a loud whisper was heard—

"Oh! I am dying to see him!"

Evidently to put an end to conversation, Miss Egremont had the harp brought in; and the visitor, though eager to display her powers, yet made disqualifying speeches.

"Oh, I am so *petite* in my figure! You look so divine at the harp. Yet I will try, as there is no one here now to see me."

"Then try your best *piano* style," said Miss Egremont. "Remember, your good uncle says noise is not music."

"My uncle has so little taste, I wonder at your quoting him."

"He may not have what is called taste now-a-days," said Mr. Egremont, "but he has a fund of good sense."

The lady sat down to the harp, and accompanied it by her voice. Mr. Eden gave Mrs. Fuller a signal to wheel his sofa back into the bed-room, where, under pretence of arranging his dress, he remained with the door shut till the hour of dinner.

## CHAPTER II.

MR. EDEN was compelled to undergo the ceremony of introduction to Miss Armytage, a short, plump girl, with a really pretty face—had she been content to let it remain as nature made it; but, being a great reader, she had found out that small mouths and large eyes were the prescriptive right of all heroines; her lips were, therefore, put into form as if, like Miss Allscrip, in the beautiful old play of the "Heir-ess," she was practicing to say, "*niline primine*;" and her eyes, distended to an unmeaning stare, often showed more than the upper part of the pupil. With all this, the lady was a *bas bleu*; and knowing Mr. Eden was from the emporium of taste, no effort on the side of the rector's family could keep her from attacking him on the subject of literature. Mr. Eden was a reserved man—he might be a proud one—and as his conversations with Mr. Egremont had been only on the very highest authors, he might have a contempt for modern poetry. All one to Miss Armytage. Much more intent on showing her own learning than fathoming the depth of his, she ran through numberless unconnected questions, and finished up with asking if he did not doat on

Byron. Mr. Eden smiled, for he remembered the line,

"I hate a dumpy woman".

"Ah, you are laughing at my enthusiasm. Well, I own the fact. I am an enthusiast; I am almost romantic. I am never weary of Byron, let the prudes say what they will. Other poets I may sometimes find obscure, but to his ideas mine jump so instantaneously, that they almost seem to be my own!"

Miss Egremont, now really uneasy, withdrew the lady to the garden, under pretence of showing her some new botanical specimen; and Mr. Egremont begged his guest to attribute her oddities to an imperfect education and total seclusion from the world. "Her uncle," added he, "with whom she resides, has an equal share of oddity, but is a character of a different stamp, and a worthy, good man. He will probably be here in the evening, and you will be amused at the strong contrast."

According to his usual custom, Mr. Armytage, with truly parental care, came to conduct his niece home—a plain, elderly man, who had never changed the fashion of his dress since he was twenty-one, and presented a figure Mr. Eden had never seen in life except on the stage. Yet, notwithstanding his rolled stockings, long waistcoat, and large cuffs to his coat, there was something venerable and respectable in his appearance. He looked like a man content with his years, and enjoying the calm that virtuous age is sure to bring. After the usual salutations to the party, he turned to his niece, saying—

"Well, Annie, are you ready to go home?"

"Well, now, that is so like you, uncle—calling me Annie when you know my name is Anastasia, and asking me to go home when there is yet a full hour of daylight."

"Why, as to your name, it is a very foolish one; and for the daylight, we shall avoid the dews."

"Oh, I love the hour after sunset, when all the landscape is softened by mist!" and the lady was proceeding in a most poetic strain, which the uncle cut short by gruffly telling her she might be very fond of colds and fevers, too, but he was not—intimating that when she was ill, he found her very fretful; and that when his turn came, he found her a bad nurse. To stop these plain hints, she asked if Mr. Eden had seen the Miss Egremonts' drawings.

"Certainly not," was the answer of Mary, the eldest. "Those who are accustomed to the best productions of the day would but be fatigued by the sight of unfinished sketches."

"I believe they are better than yours, though, Annie," broke in the incorrigible uncle; "for one of your cows had but three legs; and your castles are all upon the principle of the leaning tower at Pisa."

"Yet," said Mr. Egremont, "Miss Armytage must have some employment for her leisure hours; and excellence in drawing is only to be obtained by

practice. She should rather be encouraged than too severely criticised."

"Better spin and weave, as her mother and grandmother did. But what now?" he exclaimed, as Bevis, rising from his slumbers, stretched up his huge form near him. "What! have you been hunting, that you bring two overgrown stag-hounds with you? Or are you going out by moonlight with them?"

"Uncle, you really have no sympathies. Are you not fond of dogs?" said she, turning to Mr. Eden; "and are not these very fine ones?"

Mr. Armytage happily prevented the necessity of an answer, by declaring he would not risk the dews of a September evening in compliance with any love of the picturesque whatever; and giving his fair niece a whisper not to stare so, he compelled her to depart without having made any progress toward ascertaining who was likely to make an impression on the heart of the silent gentleman, who, handsome as he was, must be a hero of romance, and could not have broken his leg for any earthly purpose but to fall in love—and to marry.

Mr. Egremont, when his daughters left the room, begged Mr. Eden not to think too hardly of their young visitor, for that, in spite of her love of display, she was a very valuable assistant to his daughters in their attempts to diffuse comfort and knowledge in the neighborhood. In other respects, her want of application was so notorious, that it was a question whether she had ever read half the books she was so ready to praise. It was hardly possible to help drawing a parallel between young women placed apparently in the same situations with the same opportunities; but the modest father, when this was hinted, attributed the difference to the virtues and accomplishments of a mother, unfortunately dead, but who had laid the foundation of what he had, however inadequately, endeavored to complete.

"I am but a young friend in more senses than one," said Mr. Eden; "and it may almost seem presumptuous in me to express a hope that such blossoms are not destined to blush here unseen. I am so deeply indebted to your hospitable care, that it would be a relief to my mind to be allowed to introduce to you some of my female friends, who could bring the Miss Egremonts into the light of fashion, where they would not fail to be highly appreciated."

"I thank you most sincerely for your kind wishes. Your involuntary visit has been so pleasant to us, that I hope we shall be able to induce you to repeat it. For my girls, they are happy because they are contented. I do not wish to give them glimpses of a world of which they are never to make a part."

"I find I must speak plainer. I confess to you, then, that I am near marriage with a young woman of rank and high fashion. I am determined on residing a considerable portion of every year in this neighborhood; and I shall be truly happy for Lady Emily to have such friends as the Miss Egremonts.

Surely it would be well for that friendship to begin in London."

"Your confidence merits mine. Mary is engaged to the young man who will succeed me as a minister among these simple people. It will be wise in Elinor to remain with her sister; and it will be well for both of them to keep far from a world of which we hear little good. Your residence will be a ray of sunshine among us, which may warm without scorching."

The conversation was dropped. But as Mr. Eden's returning strength enabled him to mix more with the family, and, with assistance, to attend them in short walks, he could but lament that two such fair specimens of what a careful education may effect, should be left to very limited society, and that not of the best order. Yet when he looked around, and saw what they had brought about in their village, he could but confess they were well placed for the benefit of others; and he sighed as he contrasted them with the ephemeral flutterers of fashion, whose lives were without end or aim, either for themselves or others. Even Miss Armytage and her plain-spoken uncle rose in comparison with the individuals among whom he had passed so many never-to-be-recalled hours.

When the time was drawing near for Mr. Eden's return to the south of England, he described a picturesque priory within a day's ride, to which he begged a party might be made, including Miss Armytage, whose never-failing volubility rendered her an excellent auxiliary to such a plan. Martin was dispatched to a neighboring town for a barouche, and Mr. Egremont was to ride the horse, whose spirit had been subdued by constant exercise. The party set out early in the morning of a day very fine for the season, when the fading trees added to the beauty of every view. Miss Armytage was all rapture, exclamation, and soliloquy, leaving the rest of the party to mark the grand features of the varying landscape at their leisure. She asked questions and answered them herself, to the great delight of those who would have found it difficult or embarrassing to have done it: and if she provoked her companions, she sometimes amused them; for she had not yet attained that proficiency in playing the fine lady as to make all parties subservient to her whims or inclination.

A ride of three hours brought them in sight of Allondale Priory, and Martin was sent forward to obtain permission for viewing the interior.

This very interesting building, now partially ruined, had been the chosen retreat of a brotherhood of Benedictines; and, like the greater part of religious edifices, was seated in a sheltered valley, on a gently rising mound, at the foot of which spread a small lake, now seen and now hid among groups of very aged trees. Behind the building, the Cheviot hills were distant enough to seem melting into the sky; but some nearer prominences, closing in the valley, were beautifully diversified with forest wood

of every description. It was a lovely scene, brightened by a clear, October sun; enriched by gay-tinted foliage; in some places, partially veiled by the blue mist so peculiar to mountainous districts. The priory was such as it might be imagined it would be at the suppression of religious institutions, except that a considerable part of it was in absolute ruin. Miss Armytage raved of Gothic and florid Gothic; of embrasures and corbels; of mullions, cinque foils, quatre foils, machicolations, springing arches, and flying buttresses; confounding castellated with monastic architecture, till she wearied and bewildered herself, while the others were quietly looking on and fully enjoying the picturesque scene.

When the party entered the house, they were attended by an old woman, who courted respectfully, but seemed impenetrably deaf, as she answered no questions nor paid the slightest attention to Miss Armytage—who, to do her justice, made most strenuous attempts to get information. She merely said, as they entered the different rooms, "The hall; the refectory; the library; the saloon." The greater part of them were the more pleased with this, as they could examine and comment on the very curious pictures and antique furniture, without any danger of her notice.

Some of the portraits were of the hard outline and shadowless breadth of the time before Holbein; some rich ones from his more mellow pencil, and others of the more courtly style of Zuccherò; but Miss Armytage classed them all in her own mind, and gave to each one a name of royalty or rank, though most probably the rude semblance of a Northumbrian squire or his unambitious dame. One of more modern date, she insisted, was the Duke of Argyle—Jeanny Dean's duke—it must be him; he was so handsome, and looked so good!

"Horace Walpole would differ from you on the article of goodness in that duke," said Mr. Eden, smiling; "but I have heard this is the grandfather of the present possessor."

"And who is the present possessor?"

"I believe it is the Marquis of Allondale."

"Why, I declare, Mr. Eden, this picture is very like you—and now that your color rises, very, very like!"

"It is a fine picture by Sir Godfrey Kneller," said Mr. Egremont, rather gravely; for he found her folly not so tolerable when it was personal. "And we shall do better by examining his style, to see how far he fell below Vandyke, than by suiting likenesses to it."

The rooms were all lofty, well proportioned, and interesting, by the consistency of the ancient decorations. No modern article had been intruded to throw the massive furniture, and rich, though somewhat faded, draperies, into shade. All was in good keeping; and many articles were highly valuable, as well as interestingly curious. The walls were invariably wainscoted with oak from the surrounding forests, the color varying as it had either been varnished or oiled, in which latter case it was very

dark, as well as the highly polished floors, seldom covered but by a small piece of tapestry in the middle; but even where the wood had by time attained the deepest tint, rich gilded mouldings and broad carved picture-frames gave so much relief, that the *tout ensemble*, in effect, was by no means sombre. An air of chastened magnificence pervaded the whole, more delightful than the gayest coloring or the fresh look of newness.

The ample bed-rooms, each with its adjoining large dressing-closet, were more elaborately ornamented with pilasters, carved cornices, and mouldings, than the state-rooms below. The bed-hangings were embroidery or brocade, lined with lighter silk; and the canopies rose in different forms, some like the old tents, seen now only in pictures, eight and even ten feet from the bed itself—a strange contrast to the present mode, where hardly breathing room seems left. The rich, voluminous folds of drapery swept the floors, and many of the ornaments immediately about the bed were fantastically carved, and overlaid with fretted gold.

The library was the last room visited; and here, to their no small surprise, they found refreshments spread on a side-table, and Martin ready to wait on them. But the striking beauties of this splendid apartment absorbed all other feelings, even in the volatile Miss Armytage, who instantly declared that, of all she had seen or read, this was most surpassingly grand. The oak had been suffered to retain its native hue, with no other ornament than the most delicate carving; of which the lofty roof, rising into light arches, was a surprising specimen, and might be supposed—as the chimney-piece bore his name—to be the work of Grinling Gibbons. Three large windows of stained glass poured in a flood of gorgeous, yet not dazzling light; and on both sides of the door were niches, each holding a complete suit of armor, still bearing its polish, and richly inlaid with gold. The books were also in recesses arched over, thus appearing to form the wall rather than projecting from it; and among these were some illuminated manuscripts and miscels, the latter specimens of the earliest efforts in the art of printing.

Little time was left to do justice to the viands; but Mr. Eden was less reserved than usual, and appeared to much advantage as he exerted himself to do the honors. Miss Armytage whispered to Mary Egremont, "Whatever your father may say, I vow he is the very image of the Marquis of Allondale's grandfather."

As they turned again and again to admire the *coup d'œil* of the room, Mr. Eden said, gayly, to Miss Armytage—

"Do you think you could be content to pass the greater part of the year in such a place as this?"

"Oh! la!" cried she, clapping her hands, and giving a skip from the floor, "I only wish some one would try me! But I would have the house full of company!"

"Should you not be afraid of ghosts?" continued

he, opening a casement in one of the windows, and showing the ruins of the chapel close by. "There are the tombs remaining, as you may see."

"Why, that is rather—rather awkward! But, as I said before, I would have the house full of company; and I am sure we should be more likely to frighten the ghosts with our noise than they us by their appearance."

"Where would you get so many people from?" said Mr. Egremont.

"You may call spirits from the vasty deep,  
But will they come when you do call?"

"Spend one season in London, sir," said Mr. Eden, "and you will see that, if the shrine of dissipation were set up in Timbuctoo, votaries would soon flock to it."

"Now, ladies," said Mr. Egremont, "were you the mistress of such a place as this, what should you consider your first duty? You, Miss Armytage—what?"

"To amuse myself, to be sure."

He turned to his daughters, when Elinor exclaimed—"My dear father, do not ask me such a question till you have given me full twelve months to get accustomed to its beauties and interesting associations!"

"Oh, I have no doubt here are many more things to see," said Miss Armytage. "Trap-doors, and doors behind the hangings or the books; and long, dark passages—ay, and ghosts, too, if one did but know. Don't you think there have been murders committed here, Mr. Eden?"

"If the walls of old houses could speak," said Mr. Eden, seriously, "it is to be feared they would tell many a sad tale—perhaps horrid ones. But we will hope, for charity's sake, the elegant and learned Benedictines were free from such stains; and since the dissolution of monasteries, the times have not been so murderous."

"You have not answered my question, Mary?" said Mr. Egremont.

"Oh, I must plead with my sister; for this would be an enchanted room, and I fear I should long remain here spellbound."

"True woman, after all is said and done. Amusement is the business of your lives. It is well if we can make it rational."

"But may there not have been murders here, even since the Reformation?" again interrupted Miss Armytage.

"There may have been *Front de Bœufs* in modern days, for we have unfortunately had wild times since bluff King Hal; but I do not know that any such tradition belongs to these walls."

"Go and take your last look at the outside of them," said Mr. Egremont, "while the setting sun

is streaming on them; and then wrap up warm for our ride homeward."

The ladies hastened, on this intimation; and when the gentlemen followed, Mary was sketching the building, and some of its accompanying scenery.

"I have not yet seen any of your drawings, Miss Egremont; nor was I aware that you were in the habit of sketching from nature. Will you allow me?"

Mary gave him the book without hesitation, and he was surprised at the truth and force of her hasty touches. To the right of the priory was a range of ruins almost covered with ivy—the dormitories of the brethren and the cells of penitents, or perhaps of the lay brothers—with here and there a tall arch starting from the midst, festooned by creeping plants. A group of trees hid the extent of these crumbling masses from the sight. The chapel was visible on the other side.

"Will you do me the favor," asked Mr. Eden, "to draw the foliage of the trees nearer to the main building, and let the ivy of the ruins mingle with the branches to the right hand? It takes away the appearance of so much dilapidation."

Mary did as she was requested, though she thought it spoiling the effect of the drawing, preferring, like other artists, ruins to an entire building.

"And now, Miss Egremont," said he, with some hesitation, "I am a beggar for the sketch."

"This," said she, "is not worth your acceptance; but Elinor will make it so. She is by far the better artist. I dash away roughly, but she finishes with some taste."

On their arrival at the rectory, the portfolios were no longer neglected; and Mr. Eden was pleased to see that Miss Armytage really enjoyed his surprise. He had so often been called on to praise the drawings of young girls against his conscience, that he usually shrank with horror from such an exhibition. He now saw what an intimate acquaintance with beautiful nature can effect, and thought himself rich in receiving from the hand of Elinor, not only the sketch he had requested, but five others of equal interest from scenes in the vicinity.

There were a delicacy and generosity in Mr. Eden's mode of rewarding all who had attended him, highly gratifying to the inmates of the rectory. The only remuneration that could be offered to themselves was his cordial friendship, and an assurance of his firm resolution to return soon. The two horses were left for the use of Mr. Egremont, as a carriage was now necessary to convey Mr. Eden home. Soon after his departure, the young ladies found, in their work-basket, a bank note of considerable value, with a billet, stating that it was to augment their charitable fund.

(To be continued.)

## AUNT RACHEL'S EYES.

### JOSEPH JENKINS'S STORY.

#### CHAPTER I.

AUNT RACHEL stopped knitting, and looked over the top of her spectacles straight into my face. Now, I never could abide with comfort this sort of perusal: it is so much more searching than any questioning in words, that you feel as if every secret of your heart were understood, and yet have no chance to vindicate yourself or to reply, because you do not know what dangerous committal you might make. Aunt Rachel looked on without moving her lips. I—whistled. What else could a body do?

"Thee is musical to-day," said the old lady, at length, and quietly resumed her knitting. And it was none of your modern ornamental or fanciful affairs that she was engaged upon, but good, substantial men's hose, intended for Friend Folke, to whom, thirty years before, she had pledged herself, in presence of God and the Friends, to do the whole duty of a wife. Faithfully had she kept her promise, and faithfully he his likewise. It seemed, indeed, as if there were but one thought between them; that they understood each other as by instinct or intuition. And what Rachel said or did not say, I know Nathan said or would not say. While Rachel occasionally looked over her spectacles, it appeared to me that Nathan was peeping also out of the one stocking of his, which she held in her lap, its length growing momentarily under her busy fingers. Strange fancies take possession of one's imagination. Nathan seemed to me to rise out of that stocking, as the giant rose out of the copper-kettle in the Arabian tale. I saw him at full length, in that coat of antique and formal cut, with other garments to correspond; his placid face beaming—no, not beaming, but expressing, in a more subdued tone, perfect happiness. And then Nathan's face, in the vision, assumed the staring look which Rachel had just relinquished. Then I wondered if he ever—kissed his wife!

The thought was too ludicrous. It was like the mantle of George Fox thrown over a statue of Venus, or any other incongruous absurdity. Rachel and Nathan Folke kissing each other! I would as soon expect to see Arch street meeting putting on the airs of the opera-house. I laughed outright—out loud—at my own thoughts; and Friend Rachel said—

"Thee has merry fancies this morning, Joseph; but I am impressed with the conviction that they are more light than useful. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child."

"Good morning, aunt," said I, starting to my feet  
"Farewell," she answered; and the pleasant tone in which she said that word dwells still on my memory.

Dear old lady! she was long since consigned to the earth, with as little ostentation as she had moved upon it. Nathan sleeps beside her. And in the memory of "friends," their images rest, like dear visions of departed moral beauty. No portraits of them are extant; they were too consistent in their profession and practice to submit to any such vain perpetuation of the features of the mere creature. The "fleshly tabernacle," they said, would fulfill its work and be dissolved—why preserve its resemblance?

My mother, sorely to Rachel's grief, married at an early age, "out of meeting." Her husband was worthy of her love, but she wedded only to bury him. He did not even live to see his child, and thus was I born fatherless. The widow had forfeited her membership of the Society of Friends by her marriage; and although an acknowledgment of the "error" would have restored her, she declined during her husband's short life, out of deference to his wishes, known, though unexpressed. She had counted the cost and the consequences, and decided to abide by them. After his death, respect for his memory deterred her from what she considered would have been a reflection upon him. Once only Aunt Rachel mentioned the subject—my mother rather hinted than detailed her reasons. "What thee thinks is right, is right for thee," said Rachel; and there the matter dropped. My mother, however, followed her early associations and education; and, without any formal application, resumed her place among the worshipers in meeting and among the social circles of the friends of her youth. She was deeply afflicted, and who so well as they with whom she had grown up could minister to her consolation? Not long did she need it; for she early followed my father. Thus was I left an orphan. My guardian, by his will, was a gentleman not of the Society of Friends; but, with excellent good sense, he permitted me to remain in the custody of my mother's connections. And as I came to age, the Quaker habits of costume and manners subdued a disposition which might have led me into reckless fashionable extravagance and folly. Dear Aunt Rachel! how much of what is best in my character do I owe to the influence of her precepts and example. Nor was Uncle Nathan without his share in the formation of my character, and the inculcation of correct principles. Am I vain in my



estimate of myself? No matter—Mr. Godey will preserve my story.

Well, to my story. On the morning on which Aunt Rachel, as before recorded, surveyed me over the tops of her glasses, I had, very much to her astonishment, after sitting a few moments in silence, said—"Aunt, I am going to-night to see Kean."

"And what is Kean, Joseph?" she asked.

Dear, unsophisticated old lady! I am sure she had never read a play-bill in her life. I pitied her ignorance with a boy's impertinence; and proceeded, by way of further enlightenment, to say—"I am going to the theatre."

And then came the look which I have described. She said nothing in opposition; but her mild and searching look seemed to chide me as much as if she had said, "Joseph, I perceive thee has kept bad company. Evil communications corrupt good manners, and never in this house could such thoughts have happened to thee." I wondered if she *knew* my erratic movements. In childhood and youth, I was struck with the apparent universal knowledge of the old ladies; and subsequent years have not decreased my admiration. So take care, young man. Your mother *does* "know you are out," nowever well you think you have concealed the fact. And, like Aunt Rachel, many women forbear to say all they think, or to remark upon all that they know.

I went to the theatre, wisely keeping out of the way of my uncle and aunt through the day, to avoid the interdict which I thought might be the result of their deliberations. What a world of wonder opened upon me on that eventful evening! Many times I had passed the open doors of the vestibule of Chestnut street theatre, and envied those whom no Aunt Rachel prevented from boldly walking in. The statues in the niches in front of the building had, on many a day, fixed my curiosity as to what manner of amusement such figures could possibly portend. Altogether—though, of course, from my reading, I could not fail to have some notion of the drama and the stage—the subject had been one of bewilderment to me. Books spoke of the drama as a refined and intellectual amusement. Strange specimens of refinement, it seemed to me, hovered about the purloins of the "Temple of the Muses." But now my doubts were to be resolved. I walked to the box-office with as much of the air of an *habitué* as I could assume; but, as I entered, I *saw my coat* for almost the first time in my life—saw it, I mean, with something of the same feeling with which Adam and Eve discerned that they were naked. It was not cut for such a place as that into which I was entering.

I called for a pit-ticket, and the box-keeper held out his hand. I understood—how distinctly are trifles remembered!—that this was not one of the places where a man's honesty is taken for granted. When he received my money—those were the half-dollar days of the pit—he gave me the ticket. Armed with this bit of pasteboard, I was passed in. The

full light was not yet exhibited, but—it was one of Kean's nights, remember—still I was dazzled. There was a dense crowd, and I wedged myself with difficulty into a seat. Above and around were a sea of faces, and clouds of ribbons and laces. It was early, and a buzz of animated conversation filled the house. As for me, I sat in wrapped astonishment gazing at the drop-curtain. Presently, the orchestra began to assemble; and after the usual notes of preparation, amid the shouts and calls of the pit, they played an overture, with which I should have been well content for my half-dollar's worth. The play—it was Richard III.—completely entranced me. Others, who were in the habit of frequenting the house, had admiration only for Kean, and tolerated the other leading performers. But not a man walked upon that stage that night who did not excite my admiration. I gazed upon the rank and file, ten men strong, which represented the two armies, with awe-struck wonder; and had, indeed, so much applause and sympathy for the underlings, that my praise of the hero of the night fell far behind that which was showered upon him by the audience. There seemed to me, I remember, a species of injustice in giving the whole credit to one, to the disadvantage, as it appeared to my democratic notions, of the rest.

To the tragedy succeeded a song as an interlude, and the whole was crowned by a "laughable farce." In this latter, I was completely delighted; and it surprised me that many of the audience should be so careless of receiving their money's worth that they left the house at the close of the first piece. I had not then learned that of this description of amusement, as of all others, men may tire; and when the curtain fell on the huddled conclusion of the little comedy, leaving impossibilities arranged to the entire satisfaction of all the dramatis personæ, like *Oliver Twist*, I could have begged for more. I was astonished to find that the hour was midnight; and as I hurried home, began to feel the reproaches of conscience after my stolen pleasure. Many things had I seen that night which I could not reconcile to my ideas of right and propriety. But I argued that they were not necessary accompaniments of the drama, and I forgot my fears of reprimand, in conning over impossible schemes to "elevate the theatre."

As I approached my uncle's house, I began to wonder how I was to obtain an entrance. This was a consideration which had not entered my mind when planning the evening's amusement. But I was surprised to find a carriage before the door, and to notice lights moving over the house. The latch turned at my touch—and this at midnight! Awe crept over me as I entered; and, I know not why, but I passed directly to my aunt's chamber. All was still; the door was partly open, and through the crack I perceived that there were a number of persons in 'he room—the family, and four or five others whom I recognized as intimate friends.

I entered unnoticed, and drew near the bed. My

ant, supported by pillows, seemed to be in a calm and deep sleep. The women's eyes around were red with weeping, and the faces of the men indicated that they struggled with strong emotions of grief. *I thought*. Not a word was spoken. No one seemed disposed to move. Nothing disturbed the perfect repose of that sick chamber. How long this lasted I cannot tell, but it was long enough for my mind to do the thinking of a lifetime. Are we masters of our own imaginations?

While I looked upon the woman who lay before me, that consciousness of the presence of any person save her and myself, passed away. Presently, I lost all recollection and observation of the place in which I was. I was back again at the theatre. Again the bright lamps glared around me. Again I heard the calls of the noisy, half-grown boys, and men as childish as they. Again the music, with its crash of sounds, stilled all other disturbances. Again I saw the tiers of faces piled above me; again the clouds of laces and ribbons, the gaudy flutter of vanity and folly. But amid it all, methought wherever I turned, my aunt's placid, inquiring face was earnestly gazing into mine.

The play proceeded. In every scene was the countenance of the dying woman. The mocking hate of Richard was rebuked by the dying gentleness of the Quaker matron. In the tent scene, her face was among the procession of the murdered who visited the warrior in his dreams—silent, sad, reproachful. And when Richard bounded from his couch, I was amazed to see that he had undergone a transformation. He was Richard no longer, but myself! I groaned aloud, and shuddered visibly. Nathan Folke placed a chair, and gently seated me in it. He had passed a long life in looking death in the face; and now he only sorrowed that Rachel was going before him. It was sorrow not for her, but for himself.

I covered my face with my hands, but could not shut out the hateful pageant. Scene after scene passed before me. Sometimes I forgot Rachel, and was again entirely enwrapped in the drama. But suddenly that face *would* reappear, when least expected. I opened my eyes and gazed about the room. There stood Nathan Folke, his broad hat shadowing his eyes, and concealing the upper part of his face; but I could perceive that his lips and chin quivered nervously. A strong man was struggling with the natural emotions and impulses of grief. A Christian was schooling his heart to say, "Thy will be done."

Again the chamber scene faded away. The "interlude," a comic song, or, to speak more properly, a duet, filled my ear. I saw the gipsy bonnet of the actress, and Nathan's broad-brim became a peasant's hat. Under the gipsy appeared my aunt's pale features, and Nathan took the place of the peasant actor. And *they*—Nathan and Rachel—sang the duet!

I started—frightened—for I had felt a laugh creeping over my face. Nathan and Rachel Folke singing a comic song! My movement called Nathan's

attention again to me. I was rubbing my eyes. "Thee had better go to-bed, Joseph," said he, in a kind and low voice. I looked upon my aunt. She still remained apparently asleep and unconscious. "Thee had better go to-bed," Nathan Folke repeated, "and if there is any change for the worse, we will call thee."

I obeyed, mechanically; for to stay in the apartment longer was more than I dared to do. The strange and new excitement in which the first part of the night had been passed, overmastered all my efforts to keep its scenes from haunting my imagination. And the mixing of a dying woman among the gilt pasteboard and tinsel of the stage, was a thing so terrible, that I feared to trust myself longer where any could observe my emotions. I retired to my chamber, but not to sleep. Painfully, strangely did the hours pass until daylight. Heartily rejoiced was I when the wholesome and natural light of the sun took the place of the unnatural glare which had haunted me through the hours of darkness. Was my aunt living or dead?

I heard a well-known, measured step in the passage, and sprang to the door as my uncle passed. "Rachel has passed the crisis," he said, in a voice choked with grateful emotion, "and the physician says she will recover." I threw myself upon the bed and slept until noon.

Aunt Rachel did recover. Her attack had been one of those sudden and unusual efforts of the soul to free itself, which physicians variously class and define. A strong constitution, unimpaired by excess and unwearied by excitement, resisted the disease; and if she seemed weaker afterward, she appeared also more spiritual, more heavenly. I had been reading to her in her chamber one morning, during her convalescence. The word "Shakspeare" occurred in the book; and after I had closed it, I paused to review *that* night.

Aunt Rachel broke the silence. "I forgot to ask thee, Joseph," she said; "but did thee see Kean?"

The blood rushed to my face. I looked up, and Rachel wore her wild, inquisitorial look. Her blue eyes were piercing me through and through. The breath of a whistle came to my aid, but I swallowed it, and bit my lips to cure that propensity. Aunt Rachel was waiting for an answer.

I began at the beginning, and told her the whole. She listened, sometimes with a smile—she laughed outright when I told her of the duet—but oftener there was a sad expression on her face.

"It was painful pleasure for thee, Joseph; but it has taught thee wisdom. We knew about the theatre, but thy vision in the chamber was a visitation which we could not know till thee told us. May it do thee good."

And it has done me good. Sometimes I attempt to read a play-bill, but Aunt Rachel's Eyes invariably come between my sight and the staring capital letters; and I pass on. I am a haunted man—haunted by AUNT RACHEL'S EYES; but when my own con-

science does not reprove me, the EYES do not. I would not lose the vision for a world.

## CHAPTER II.

TIME rolled on. Aunt Rachel still kept her habit of looking over the tops of her spectacles at me; and notwithstanding the theatrical lesson, I am very much afraid, as I review my life, that the occasions for these inquisitorial glances did not diminish in frequency. Perhaps I grew more independent, and cared less for these silent admonitions. All proper respect is certainly to be paid to age, but our seniors cannot reasonably expect that we should see everything through their spectacles. The young look their present in the face, and look forward to the future with hope. The old look upon youth and its doings with a retrospective glance; and there is a world of difference between the appearances of things from two such opposite points of view.

"Joseph," said Aunt Rachel to me, one evening, "I think thee is too young."

"Well, aunt," I answered, "that is a fault which will mend daily. But too young for *what* does thee mean?"

"And furthermore, Joseph, I think *she* is too young."

"Who?" I asked.

But Aunt Rachel did not answer. Her eyes were fastened as intently on her work as if her fingers alone could not follow the path over which, from calf to toe, they had traveled ninety-nine times. She was at work on the first half of the fiftieth pair of stockings which she had knit for Uncle Nathan. How long life seems when we count the trifles—laborious trifles which make up its sum. I wondered if *she*—for I *did* know who Aunt Rachel meant—would ever live to knit forty-nine and a half pairs of stockings for me!

Old people mistake—and they mistake quite as often as the young. Now the truth was, that I had never ventured to put my childish attachment for Sally Gray in any definite shape until Aunt Rachel spoke to me. I was fond of chatting with her; and she was as fond of me, I suppose; and there it might have ended, blown over like other childish things, and passed out of recollection. But Aunt Rachel, in her too great caution, set us upon doing the very thing we should not have thought of so early by several years. The moon rose that very night upon a boy and a girl—Joseph and Sally, to wit—as firmly affianced as ever couple imagined themselves. And we went to rest that night—at least, I am sure I did—perfectly satisfied with the moon and stars, the earth, and the solar system entirely. Our fate we regarded as fixed beyond all peradventure. We were henceforth to be "all" to each other. Mothers and fathers, and uncles and aunts, and all such intrusive individuals, were ruled out of our kingdom; and we declared ourselves in a state of suspended independence, prepared for wedlock as soon as we

should be legally capable. Morally and naturally we held ourselves all ready. I cannot say whether Aunt Rachel suspected this juvenile betrothal or not. Her eyes peered at me often, as if she not merely suspected, but *knew* everything.

Sally had a more difficult life of it. It was her fortune—I was about to write *misfortune*—to have an elder sister; and this elder had passed her teens, and traveled through more than a moiety of the twenties, without ever having heard anything like such a "declaration" as Sally had listened to from your humble servant. But the maiden was Sally's sister; and as the circumstance of being born of the same parents and nurtured under the same roof must beget some kind of attachment even for the most unlovely, Sally loved this sister. Sometimes wisecrackers wonder how brothers and sisters *can* quarrel. I have none to quarrel with; but observation of families that have fallen under my eye, has made me feel surprise how brothers and sisters tolerate each other at all. So many unkind and unsisterly things are done and said, and so many mutual liberties are taken which no one else would venture upon, that natural affection must be more than a fiction to overmaster natural anger.

Sally—the little simpleton—let this older and more artful girl wheedle her whole wonderful secret out of her. Young lovers—female lovers—must have a confidant. And Prudy—her name was Prudence—pity it had not been more her nature—listened like a weasel sucking an egg, till she had the whole marrow of the thing. Every expression of countenance; every oh! ah! and alas! every moonstruck movement and utterance—everything I did say, and many things that I did not, were poured into Prudy's listening ears. The artful hussy!

I think Prudy resembled her mother. Not that the mother was not well enough. Old women—by which I mean old matrons, mothers of families and heads of households—have a right to certain antiquated and supercilious notions about young love and romance. They are correct and sensible in preferring the smoke of fried bacon to the perfume of a rose, and in making more of a recipe for preserving plums or pickling pork than of a letter amatory or declaratory. It is their vocation to be practical and commonplace; but nobody's unmarried daughter has any business to be like her mother in these respects. It is a delightful compliment to say of a young lady, "she is what her mother was *at her age*;" but a young girl—and Prudy considered herself young—if like her mother without the above qualification, is like, sex excepted, a boy with a man's hat on.

As I came home one day, a visitor was just going away from the house; and Aunt Rachel, with old-fashioned and sincere politeness, had come to the door to say "Farewell." She brushed down both sides of her neat apron—a graceful movement in an old lady—looked up and down the street; caught a sight of me, and retreated suddenly within doors. I looked after the retiring caller. There

was not, at that time, a bonnet, shawl, or cloak on the women's side of the meeting, that I did not know by sight. I could identify the wearer as far as I could see her. It is only your careless observers, whose notions of individuality have been blurred over and confused by gaudy colors and changing fashions, who cannot discern the difference between one Friend's bonnet and another, and read the characters and individualities of each in the folds, or in the absence of folds.

It was Sally's mother; and, of course, a call from her was an event, just at this juncture, when I fancied all the world was in some way affecting the loves of Sally and myself, or affected by them. I went into aunt's room, predetermined to turn her own tactics against her, and read *her* face; but the old lady did not this time look up. She was just "toeing off" that ninety-ninth stocking. I thought I saw the twinkle of a smile playing round her lips, like the flicker of flame in a sheet of tinder; but she did not raise her eyes. She worked at the stocking with painful precision—like a person diverted from her occupation by foreign thoughts, and laboring to concentrate her attention. I walked out; but stealing a peep over my shoulder, I detected my aunt's face raised at my exit, and, to use a colloquial expression, "full of laugh."

I was insulted. It was evident that I was insulted. Like every other boy who fancies himself in love, I determined within myself that all men and women who have outlived "the freshness of their affections" should be voted obsolete, and consigned to some receptacle for senility, where the old women could darn stockings and fondle babies, and the old men be amused with yesterday's newspaper. I saw, or thought I saw, that our loves were reaching a crisis; and sallied off that very evening to make a right manly, formal call upon "my Sally." I was determined valiantly to assert my manhood, and claim my right to be considered full grown in mental as well as bodily stature. Sally's sister Prudy opened the door, and met me, I thought, with a most quizzical expression of countenance. Indeed, it appeared as if every object I met, inanimate as well as breathing, was laughing at me.

"How do?" said the mother; "and how's thee aunt?"

She thought, or pretended to think, that Aunt Rachel had sent me upon an errand. I answered as such questions are usually answered, and seated myself in a chair which Prudy handed me. Sally was not there. For a few moments we had a silent meeting.

"How does thee get on at school now?" asked the old lady.

School! Why is it that old folks must murder one's manly aspirations? I was getting more uneasy every moment.

"Does thee master chastise with a whip?" said the merciless old woman.

With all my efforts to pass myself off as a man, I was compelled to answer as a boy to these and

many other questions which the mother propounded and Prudy enjoyed. At last came the climax. I could not ask in direct terms, but ventured to remark, "I do not see Sally this evening."

"No," said Prudy, "she is up stairs *dressing a doll!*"

I can't remember what else was said. Prudy went out; and I heard a voice very like Sally's, though *in alto*, answering some request, very sharply and testily; "I won't, I tell thee; so there now!" And very soon I took my leave, feeling more foolish than I ever did upon any other occasion which I can remember. As to Aunt Rachel's eyes, I tried to give them a wide berth that evening; but they were not to be escaped, and I thought that they never peered at me more roguishly. A guilty conscience, it is said, needs no accuser; and a consciousness of foolishness wants no reminder. Heigho! But the road through the debateable years when one is neither man nor boy, the days of the hobbledohoy, are dull enough.

I had a mind to desert Sally. What, said conscience, and break your plighted word? Forget the moonlit vows, and all the mutual protestations? All the novels I had read by stealth, at school, under the cover of my dictionary, did not contain a single precedent which could authorize such a course. It might be the death of Sally; for, though she could not come down when that plague of a Prudy asked her, I was not to doubt her true, true love. Something must be conceded to maidenly delicacy.

So passed many days. I found I was the butt of Prudy and the two old ladies; and I began at last strongly to suspect of Sally also. Aunt Rachel's eyes grew more awfully eloquent every day; and even Nathan Folke—staid, sober, *un*-funny Nathan Folke—began to look as if he could say something, if he would. But you may do what you please to a young girl when her "own true love" is not, as Patrick says, "to the fore." She may even join in ridicule of him in his absence. Give him an hour's chance alone, however, and he will make it all straight. I did. *How* I did it remains to be told.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was a queer place that we were peeping stealthily into, Sally and I. Two or three greasy-looking men, unkempt and unshaven, were handling bits of paper as if they did not precisely understand the purport and character of that commodity. They were constables.

Behind a desk sat a portly-looking man, who appeared as if he tolerated the place and its circumstances for the same reason that many a worse place is endured—the profit it gave him. Among the other furniture of the office was a woman with her head bound up, and a surly-looking fellow, between whose coarse, rude hands and her broken head there seemed to be, or, I should say, to have been, an uncomfortable and unhealthy proximity. It was the old story—"intoxicated and disorderly." The alderman had heard, and the case had been decided, and the woman who had eagerly striven for the

man's punishment, was now pleading with justice to know what was to become of *her* when *he* went to the lock-up. This was truly a pleasant introduction for those who seek magisterial aid to get into the trap of matrimony.

Some of the officials had shown us a broken chair apiece, on which we sat—trembling. At any rate, I trembled; and I suppose Sally would have done so also, if she had not been too much occupied in keeping her frock—which her mother had strictly charged her to “keep tidy”—out of contact with the sand on the floor, the spent cigars, and other matters which indicate that some aldermen's offices are not precisely the places which Cowper describes as “sacred to neatness.” It was a nice place, this, to bring our romance—a most repulsive “Gretna.” As to the “Green,” that we brought with us. The morning business disposed of, the worthy magistrate looked up, and inquired—

“Well, young man?”

I was in no haste to answer. The officials looked upon us with curious eyes, and Sally hung her head in mute embarrassment.

“Come, what is it, my lad?” the alderman repeated.

I stammered out, in a whisper, across the desk, the errand we came upon, and made some inquiry about the private office. The thing, as it stood, was not quite to my taste; but we were pressed for time, and had moved suddenly.

“How old are you, sir?” said the magistrate, in a tone in which fun and surprise struggled for the predominance.

“The young man is nineteen on the fifth day of

next fourth month,” said a calm voice behind me. I turned, and there stood—Nathan Folke!

Of course, we were not married *that* time. And as to farther interviews with Sally, they were out of the question. How Nathan Folke got upon our track is a point I never ascertained; but I suspect Prudy (the torment) might tell. The endless and merciless jokes that Aunt Rachel inflicted upon me from that day forward! Tongue cannot tell them; for tongue never spake them—but those eyes, those eloquent eyes! Whenever I ventured upon any remark in her presence which soared above the commonest commonplace, I always looked with fear and trembling toward Aunt Rachel. If she quietly proceeded in her stocking, I took assurance to proceed; but the slightest indication of a peep over the spectacle rims, always put down my effervescence. Dear old lady—she saved me many a folly.

“But”—methinks I hear some romantic young lady inquiring—“you said, just now, that you were not married that time—when were you?”

Never, my dear—that is, never to Sally. I have a wife of my own, and several children, now, but they are nothing to her. A few years after the time of our “elopement,” on one fourth day, in Friends' Meeting—Sally had enough of the alderman with me—I saw her married; and, among Friends, I signed the certificate of the fact. And when I looked up, after inscribing upon the parchment Joseph Jenkins, in a fair, round hand, what should I meet, beaming with Edmund Kean, alderman's offices, one hundred and ten pairs of men's knit hose, and other miscellanies—what should I meet, I say, but—**AUNT RACHEL'S EYES!**

## CORA LINTON.

BY JOHN M. EVANS.

Could I but still the throbbings of this heart,  
And bury deep the memories of the past  
Which ever and anon like spectres start,  
And o'er each joy their gloomy shadows cast !—

THERE are, in each individual, certain traits of character that claim our highest admiration; while others, of an opposite nature, engender disgust to such a degree, that the few bright spots which, on first acquaintance, we delighted to look upon, become clouded, their lustre dimmed, and their beauty destroyed by the deformities that surround them.

To attain perfection, in this life, we know is impossible; but man can accomplish much to eradicate the deep-seated passions of his nature, by curbing his strong impulses and desires until the mastery is obtained. The imperious, exacting spirit of pride, that for a time sways the heart, must eventually bow, though taught by lessons of painful experience. Illustrative of this, permit us to introduce to the reader one who possessed every attraction that a beautiful exterior could present, but who lacked that important charm which alone constitutes true greatness.

Cora Linton was one who, from childhood, had remained ignorant of the nature of those feelings which flow from disappointed hopes or thwarted desires. Deprived of her parents at a very early age, she was placed in charge of a maiden aunt, whose attachment to her—that mistaken love so often displayed—prevented the proper exercise of authority, so necessary to the future well-being of its object. Pampered in the lap of luxury, every wish was anticipated by her whose wealth was equal to the gratification of every desire; while her beauty, vivacious disposition, and early development of talent rendered her an object of interest to those who visited her aunt, by whom she was encouraged in this unusual display of precocity. All who are conversant with the general character of children, who have watched the budding feelings of their nature, are familiar with the effects such a system of education must inevitably produce. In due time, the period of Cora's childhood passed; and she entered society a beautiful and brilliant creature of seventeen summers. But, however much we may admire a form of faultless symmetry and grace, a face perfect in its general contour, there is always an expression revealed through this medium, that, to the close observer, conveys a just idea of character and disposition. Habits contracted in early life, clung with a tenacity that destroyed much which otherwise might have rendered her attractive. But notwithstanding these defects, she was soon sur-

rounded by a host of admirers; among whom was George Benton, a young man of promise, who, but one year previous, had entered into a business that was already yielding him the richest return for his exertions, which promised, in a short time, to place him in an elevated position. His friends, who noticed the attachment he evinced for the society of Cora, would not permit him to remain in entire ignorance of her character; but his mind, naturally acute and discerning, was so completely blinded by the powerful passion of love, that, six months subsequent to their acquaintance, he was acknowledged her accepted suitor. What others condemned as faults, with the leniency of love he overlooked; and the dominating spirit she sometimes displayed, he conceded as a privilege her beauty and station granted.

Mr. Walton, an uncle of George, who regarded him with parental interest, was well acquainted with the dissimilarity of their tastes and dispositions; and, before he was aware of their engagement, freely communicated to him the fears he entertained of results that so ill-assorted a union might produce, and attempted to dissuade him from committing himself to one who could never render him happy.

"But, uncle, you know the affections cannot always be controlled by the desires of our friends. In affairs of the heart, where your own happiness alone is concerned, I believe in acting according to its dictates; and this will explain why my attentions are confined to Cora."

"You are right, George; where there is no love, there can be no happiness; but I fear you have not properly reflected upon this subject—that your judgment has, to a great extent, been swayed by your feelings. I have known Cora from childhood; and though I would not speak in disparaging terms of any one, I do not think she is calculated to make you what I would call a good wife."

"Ah, uncle, everything has changed since you formed your opinions of the requisite qualities every wife should possess—qualities that have become entirely obsolete, and yielded to others that the improvements of society have suggested."

"Yes, George, I am aware that sad innovations have been made upon the customs of the 'olden time;' but much that you call improvement has placed us in a worse position than that occupied fifty years ago, when each one entertained correct

ideas in regard to the dignity of labor. And, I fear, you will discover, when too late, that all the boasted achievements of modern reform will fail to impart to your home an air of peace and domestic comfort."

"Well, uncle," gayly replied George, "if I ever marry Cora, you will see what a paragon of a wife she will make; and if you now withhold your consent, I can then say you were mistaken once, at least, in regard to your estimation of character."

"To me, an error of judgment in such a case would be of little importance; but if *you* commit the mistake, you alone must endure its consequences."

Here he took his departure, leaving George to his own reflections; but all failed to convince him of her true character, as described by his uncle, whom he regarded as prejudiced against everything that was not in strict conformity with his antiquated ideas.

But time passed on, and each day seemed to strengthen the hidden links of that chain which bound him to Cora. The charms of other society were lost in his devotion to her, whose beauty had thus wrought its fascinating spell around his heart.

As we have already stated, six months elapsed before their engagement was announced; and at the expiration of three more, their marriage was celebrated with all the pomp and display Cora's position in society demanded; and a suite of apartments engaged at a fashionable boarding-house, until possession could be obtained of the splendid mansion George had purchased for his residence. But Cora, thus pleasantly situated, evinced no desire to assume the responsibilities of conducting the affairs of her own house; and full three months elapsed before he could persuade her to occupy with him that home where, he fondly hoped, his dreams of domestic bliss would yet be realized; and though surrounded by everything that could tend to her enjoyment, she was not happy. Her nature required the strongest mental excitement that the gayeties of fashionable life could contribute, to nourish those habits contracted in early life; and, with the arrival of each day, came some new invitation or engagement for the evening, thus depriving her husband of the only season he had expected to enjoy her society amid the quiet of his home. The prodigality of her expenditures, also, began to awaken serious doubts in regard to the amplitude of his means, as bills of large amount were almost daily presented, for unnecessary articles of dress and decoration; but he could not expostulate. And this course of extravagance continued for months, without interruption, when he was apprised of an entertainment she contemplated giving, which was to eclipse anything of the season.

"Well, Cora," pleasantly remarked George, "you certainly have my consent; only let your ambition to eclipse be regulated by moderation in your expenses. I am willing to gratify every reasonable wish; but you must remember that my wealth is not inexhaustible."

"There it is," replied Cora; "you men are so prone to look at expenses, and for ever counting the cost of everything, that one would suppose all pleasure must be destroyed by such parsimonious motives. For my part, I never look at this."

George was silent. It was the first allusion made to anything of the kind; and, at the time, he feared its results. But her plans were not so easily frustrated. Determining, this once, at least, to let her pursue her own course, he was suffered to remain in entire ignorance of who were invited, or what preparations had been made to receive her numerous guests, until the evening arrived, when the fears he had entertained of enormous expenses were more than verified by the brilliant display of ornaments purchased expressly for the occasion; the large table that groaned beneath the weight of costly refreshments, with various other matters of minor importance, that assisted to swell the debt he would have to discharge.

On the following day, various bills were presented, amounting, in all, to nearly five hundred dollars. George was dismayed. The highest estimate he had formed did not exceed one-third the amount; and it was with difficulty he could realize that this sum had been lavished upon an evening's entertainment.

At an early hour, he returned home, to find Cora seated at her piano; humming a familiar air, that, but a short time previous, had sounded so sweetly to him, as the silvery tones of her musical voice stole o'er his heart; but his feelings had undergone a change; and, seating himself on the sofa, he addressed her:—

"Cora, is it possible that the expenses of last evening could have reached this enormous amount?" at the same time presenting her the bills.

"I believe they are all correct," rejoined Cora.

"Then I must speak plainly, and inform you that my means will not allow of such extravagance. As I have before stated, I am willing to gratify every reasonable desire; but useless expenditures of this nature I can never sanction. Do not impugn my motives, for necessity compels me thus to speak."

"Necessity is often employed as an excuse for meanness; but I have never been accustomed to measure my desires by any such rule," warmly replied Cora.

"But the propriety of my remarks must appear evident, if you will but reflect a moment. My business, thus far, has been prosperous; but if the expenses attending this one party were generally known, I could scarcely hope of retaining the credit I have succeeded in establishing, and the result would undoubtedly prove my ruin. I therefore entreat you to consider what I have said. I have no desire to limit you to any fixed amount; only let judgment regulate your desires."

Cora could not reply; but retired to her chamber, there to vent her displeasure in a flood of tears; while George was compelled to forego her society at dinner, and returned to his store sad and disheart-

ned, to reflect upon the rupture that had thus occurred so soon after their marriage. He felt grieved at the thought of inflicting painful emotions in the breast of his young and beautiful wife; but an approving conscience justified the course duty had suggested, and he hoped that no necessity would again occur for reverting to a subject so unpleasant. But Cora soon forgot this lesson of economy, as she gradually relapsed into old habits. At the end of the year, George discovered that the large demands made upon him had not only consumed all the profits of his business, but made such sad inroads upon his invested capital, that it was with difficulty sufficient funds could be procured to discharge other obligations. Again he endeavored to reason with her, informing her of the alarming deficiency that existed, and of his determination to curtail their vast expenditures; but, alas! those resolves were formed too late. In a few months, he found that all further efforts would prove utterly unavailing; that each day was only adding new difficulties to those under which he was struggling, without hope of relief. Accordingly, he assigned all his property for the benefit of those to whom he was indebted, and frankly communicated the intelligence to Cora. True to her nature, she upbraided him, preferring accusations of mismanagement, as she wept over the blasted hopes of her ambition, instead of imparting that tender sympathy so peculiarly the province of woman to bestow in the dark hour of adversity. But all her tears and accusations could not alter their circumstances; and she was compelled to behold everything once her own exposed to the curious gaze of a crowd collected by the display of an ominous red flag that waved from her window.

George was now obliged to accept of a situation as clerk, at a small salary, and remove to a house in an obscure street; and here, in this humble abode, years rolled on without bringing any change to improve their condition; but to him, they were years of happiness. He now enjoyed the constant society of Cora; and, by the winning force of love, succeeded in reconciling her to the change that had thus reduced them to comparative poverty. But this proved a task of no small importance. The deprivation of those pleasures in which she had delighted, that wealth alone could purchase, at first created a stolid indifference to all his attentions; but gradually, these feelings were dispelled, as her heart yielded to the teachings of that devoted husband.

The flower that, rearing high its stately head, looks with disdain upon the meek beauty of the humble violet, as it slumbers in peaceful security upon its grassy bed, nestling beneath the shade of its more noble companion, is always the first to feel the blighting frosts of autumn pass, with withering breath, o'er all its boasted beauties. Thus it is with the human heart. The man who, elevated by fancied greatness above what surrounds him, awayed by the unholy influence of pride, must eventually bow beneath the humbling touch of adversity. But

the experience of all ages has proved the beneficial results that flow from its teachings.

It was the fifth anniversary of their marriage. George returned from his business at an earlier hour than usual, his countenance beaming with delight as he entered Cora's presence.

"My dear, I have received a letter; to which, with your consent, I shall return an affirmative answer. I doubt not that better days yet await us; but there is much we must sacrifice before this object can be attained. My uncle, who, you recollect, removed to the west soon after our marriage, has been apprised of our situation, and generously invites us to share his distant home. Are you willing to relinquish all the associations of youth, to sever the ties that bind you here, and, with me, share the privations incident to an emigrant's life?"

"Yes, willingly, George! Nothing can longer afford me pleasure but your society, with the joys that now cluster around our home. On contrasting my present condition with the first year of our married life, I often think how much more real happiness I now enjoy than when surrounded by all the luxuries of wealth. I have hitherto remained silent upon this subject, but my conscience has been its own accuser. I deeply deplore the ruin my folly has brought upon you; and a sad, but profitable lesson has it proved. Henceforth, my only object shall be to contribute to your happiness, and, if possible, to repay your forbearance, when, led on by the alluring gayeties of life, I preferred the excitement of the ball-room to the quiet of my home; the deceitful flattery of other tongues to the noble praise your love for me expressed in every word and action. Forgive me, George, for all the pain I have caused you; and let my future course satisfy you of the purity of my motives, by increasing devotion to your happiness."

"Let not such thoughts intrude upon your mind, Cora. I regret nothing that has befallen me, when I think of the happiness I now enjoy in your society; and the future, which appears bright, I trust may never again be clouded by sorrow."

Two months after the above conversation, George was settled in his new home amid western wilds, but surrounded by everything that could contribute to his comfort. His uncle, rightly suspecting the cause of his late misfortunes, determined, if possible, to induce him to accept of a home with him, where temptations are not of so dangerous a character, and where every action could be regulated by the restraining hand of experience. He also formed the determination of educating, according to his peculiar ideas, not only George, but this work of reform was to extend to his wife; and, long before their arrival, he had prepared a well-digested mode of procedure, in which he felt the utmost confidence. But what was his surprise, on beholding Cora, to notice the cheerful expression that played o'er those features formerly marked by discontent, as she assisted in arranging each article of furniture, with an interest



that evinced a change in the feelings that had governed the actions of former years, and which he supposed still existed; and as days grew into weeks, the old gentleman could not repress his admiration at the perfect order which reigned around his bachelor home.

Everything had improved—his table not excepted—under the influence of this presiding genius; and he began to think that he had, indeed, done her injustice; that all his fears were utterly groundless. But he determined to solve what to him appeared a mystery, and accordingly applied to George.

"Well, George, I hope you may enjoy yourself in your new home. You certainly ought to be happy in any condition of life, with such a wife as Cora."

"Why, uncle, your views have undergone an important change since we last conversed on this subject."

"Yes, I confess my error; but there appears to be some mystery connected with all this. How is it? I had supposed your misfortune in business was occasioned by the extravagance of your wife; but that certainly could not have been the cause; for, of all women, I really think Cora is unexcelled in domestic economy."

"The views you once entertained were strictly true; but Cora has been instructed by a teacher that seldom fails in imparting useful lessons to all who are brought under its influence; and I can never regret any loss I have sustained that has been the means of securing so much true happiness. When first married, she was very young; her tastes had become vitiated by mingling with the world, and it was almost an impossibility for her to settle down in life ere a single pleasure had palled. The indulgence of those expensive tastes led to excesses that I could ill afford; and when too late, I endeavored to reason with her in regard to their impropriety. But by me, her character was not understood; consequently, all influence was lost; and to this may be attributed my unsuccessful efforts in effecting a reform. The refining fires of adversity alone have separated the dross from that pure and holy principle of her nature, which now influences every action and regulates each desire."

"I am, indeed, delighted to hear that this change, though at first evidently painful, has been so materially conducive to your happiness. You are now amply repaid for every loss then sustained, in the love she bestows upon you. But, come, we must hasten home; no doubt Cora is anxious to know what subject can prove so interesting as to make us both forget our tea, which is waiting."

Ten years had elapsed since the above conversation. Ten years! What a period of seemingly endless duration to the convict, immured within the gloomy walls of his narrow cell, daring not to breathe the pure atmosphere of heaven or look upon the

unclouded sky; whose heart is never gladdened by the bright smiles of nature; who hears no sound but the whistling of the wind without, or the dull echoes of the busy loom reverberating along the vaulted passages of his prison-house; counting each day, as it wearies on, by the light which steals through the grating of his window; at morn, praying for night, and with its approach, sighing for the return of day.

But George could scarcely realize that so many years had passed since he exchanged the scenes of childhood for his western home, so happily had each moment been borne along upon the wings of love. His uncle was not long permitted to enjoy the society of those he loved; the summons of death had called him hence, very soon after their arrival. But the final arrangement of his temporal affairs had not been neglected; and to George was bequeathed the greater portion of his property, which yearly increased in value, until, at the period to which we allude, he was one of the most wealthy citizens of the town of S—. But the return of wealth, which again secured for Cora a prominent position in society, could not tempt her to the indulgence of those transient pleasures that had so nearly destroyed her happiness for ever. The sad lesson of former years had changed the desires of her heart, and given correct views of the important part each one must sustain in the great drama of life; of the responsible position occupied by parents in imparting instruction to those who have been placed under their charge. Nor was she ignorant of the fact, that a neglect of this had so unfitted her for the proper performance of life's duties, causing much of that unhappiness which marked the first year of her married life.

With untiring zeal, she now devoted the energies of her nature to the instruction of her only daughter, who was, in every respect, her exact counterpart. And what a blest employ! It is said that angels rejoice over the conversion of one soul; and may we not suppose that such a sight fills heaven with joy? To behold the fond mother, true to her nature, bending over the child of her love, teaching its infant voice in prayer to lisp the name of its Creator, fitting it for the enjoyment of purer scenes, where, in eternal anthems, that voice shall mingle with those whose music make the very arches of heaven ring? Nothing was neglected that could contribute properly to mould her disposition and refine her tastes. With the jealous eye of love, she watched the budding feelings of her young heart; instilling those principles of virtue and religion, which constitute the only sure foundation of human greatness, upon which must rest, throughout eternity, the happiness of the undying spirit. Her aim was directed to the accomplishment of a more noble object than that of securing the meed of praise bestowed by a cold and heartless world. Experience had taught her the folly of listening to its empty praises, or living for aught—but heaven.

## F L O W E R S .

BY H. T. TUCKERMAN.

I ATTENDED church on a fine day of midsummer, in one of the most beautiful villages of New England. The structure, though externally attractive, from its retired situation and the pleasant grove that surrounded it, like most places of worship in the country, had a very bare and unhallowed aspect within. The formal divisions of the pews, the superfluity of white paint, and the absence of anything venerable either in form or hue, made it agreeable to turn the eyes from the thinly scattered congregation and faded pulpit drapery, to the open window, against which a noble linden lightly tossed its sprays, and through which stole in a delicious breeze, that made the leaves of the hymn books flutter a response to that sylvan whispering, which had in it more of devotional music than the screeching base-viol and unchastened voices that soon drowned all other sounds. In reverting to the scene more immediately adjacent, however, I suddenly beheld a vase of flowers on the communion-table. They were most inartificially and tastefully arranged; the brilliant tints judiciously blended, the shadowy green naturally disposed, and the base of the jar which contained them wreathed with trailing blossoms. The sight of this vase of flowers was like enchantment. It seemed to fill that forlorn church with its presence. It spoke of nature, of beauty, of truth, more eloquently than the service. It atoned for the meagre altar, the homely edifice, and the ungarnished pews. It seemed to embody and typify the externals of worship with sacramental chalice, baptismal cup, and odorous censer.

Science and sentiment have rather formalized than illustrated the association of flowers; the one by its rigid nomenclature, and the other by an arbitrary language, profane the ideal charms of the floral kingdom. It is pleasant to regard these graceful denizens of the garden and forest, in the spirit of that fine hymn of Horace Smith's which celebrates their beautiful significance. Instead of looking at them through the microscopic lens of mere curiosity, or according to the fanciful and hackneyed alphabet that Floral dictionaries suggest, let us note their influence as symbols and memorials. To analyze the charm of flowers, is like dissecting music; it is one of those things which it is far better to enjoy than to attempt to understand. In observing the relation of flowers to life and character, I have often been tempted to believe that a subtle and occult magnetism pervaded their atmosphere; that inscriptions of wisdom covered their leaves, and that each petal, stamen, and leaf, was the divining rod or scroll that held an invisible truth. Viewed abstractly, one of

the peculiar attractions of flowers is the fact that they seem a gratuitous development of beauty; "they toil not, neither do they spin." In almost every other instance in nature, the beautiful is only incidental to the useful; but flowers have the objectless, spontaneous luxury of existence that belongs to childhood. They typify most eloquently the benign intent of the universe; and by gratifying, through the senses, the instinct of beauty, vindicate the poetry of life with a divine sanction.

Their fragility is another secret charm. A vague feeling that the bright hue is soon to wither and the rich odor to exhale, awakens in the mind, unconsciously, that interest which alone attaches to the idea of decay. These two ideas—that of the gratuitous offering of nature in the advent of flowers, the benison their presence seems to convey, and the thought of their brief duration—invest flowers with a moral significance that renders their beauty more touching, and, as it were, nearer to humanity, than any other species of material loveliness. Of the infinite variety of form, the exquisite combination of tints, the diversity of habits, and odorous luxuries they boast, it would require an elaborate treatise to unfold. We may obtain an idea of the perfection and individuality of their forms by considering their suggestiveness. Scarcely a tasteful fabric meets the eye, from the rich brocade of a past age to the gay prints of to-day, that owes not its pleasing design to some flower. Not an ancient urn or modern cup of porcelain or silver, but illustrates in its shape, and the embossed or painted sides, how truly beautiful is art when it follows strictly these eternal models of grace and adaptation. Even architecture, as Ruskin justly indicates, is chiefly indebted to the same source, not only in the minute decorations of a frieze, but in the acanthus that terminates a column, and the leaf-like pointing of an arch. A skillful horticulturalist will exhibit the most delicate shades of fragrance in different species of the rose, until a novice cannot but realize to what a miraculous extent the most refined enjoyment in nature may be sublimated and modified; and the same thing is practicable as regards both hue and form.

The spirit of beauty, in no other inanimate embodiment, comes so near the heart. Flowers are related to all the offices and relations of human life. They bound the sacrificial victim of the ancients; and, from the earliest times, have been woven into garlands for the victor, trembled in the hair of the bride, and cheered the invalid's solitude. They have been ever offered at the shrine of beauty, and claimed as the pledges of love, nor ceased to adorn the

banqueted or be scattered over the grave. Thus do-  
 neglected, even without intrinsic beauty, and ex-  
 clusive of any appeal to taste, flowers are blended  
 in the memories of the least poetical with scenes of  
 unwonted delight, keen emotion, and profound sor-  
 row. Hence they have a language for each, not  
 recognized in any alphabet, and their incense is allied  
 with the issues of destiny. McGregor's foot was  
 more firmly planted, because upon his "native  
 heather;" the Syrian, in the Jardin des Plantes, wept  
 as he clasped his country's palm-tree; Keats said,  
 in his last illness, that he felt the daisies growing  
 over him; and one who, even in renowned maturity,  
 had wandered little from the singleness of childhood,  
 declared he could never see a marigold without his  
 mouth's watering at the idea of those swimming in  
 the broth Simple Susan prepared for her mother, in  
 Miss Edgeworth's little story. There is no end to the  
 caressing allusions of Petrarch to the violet and the  
 laurel, so identified with the dress and name of his  
 beloved. Indeed, we might scan biography and her  
 poets for years, and continually find new evidences  
 of the familiar and endearing relation of flowers to  
 sentiment. Each of the latter have celebrated some  
 favorite of the race in their choicest numbers; and  
 the very names of Ophelia and Perdita are fragrant  
 with the flowers that Shakspeare, with the rarest  
 and most apposite grace, has entwined with their  
 history.

The Venetian painters must have studied color in  
 the hues of flowers; for the brilliant, distinct, and  
 warm tone of their works, affects the spectator ex-  
 actly as these rainbow gems; especially when they  
 strike the eye in an isolated position, or surrounded  
 by dim umbrage. Nor is this effect confined to the  
 domesticated flowers; for the richest and most deli-  
 cate gradations of tint occur among uncultivated and  
 indigenous plants—such as the lobelia of the swamp,  
 the saffron of the meadow, and the nameless variety  
 of prairie blossoms. There are few more curious  
 subjects of speculation than the *modus operandi* by  
 which such an infinite diversity of colors are ob-  
 tained from the same apparent source. This is an  
 exquisite secret of nature's laboratory. The physi-  
 ology of plants has been successfully investigated;  
 and it is interesting to consider that the vitality of  
 flowers is much the same as our own as regards its  
 process, though so different in kind. They have  
 affinities of sensibility; they germinate and fructify;  
 but the elements they assimilate are more subtle  
 than those which sustain animal organization; yet  
 sun, earth, and air nourish them according to a nu-  
 tritive principle not unlike that by which our frames  
 are sustained. The reciprocal action between vege-  
 table and organic life, and their respective absorption  
 and diffusion of gases, is one of the most beautiful  
 expositions of science. But the instinct of flowers  
 is not less curious; some fold their leaves at the  
 approach of a storm, and others open and shut at  
 particular hours, so that botanists have rejoiced in  
 floral dials and barometers. Their relation to sight  
 and smell is very obvious; but that to touch is less

regarded, and yet it is extraordinary how the feel of  
 almost every known fabric can be realized by the  
 contact of leaves. Where the touch is sensitive,  
 experiments of this kind may be tried, much to the  
 amusement of the sportive; for many leaves, if un-  
 perceived, and at the same time subject to an exqui-  
 site touch, give the sensation of animal, insect, and  
 even mineral substances, indicating how intricately  
 modified are the proportions of fibre, down, juice,  
 and enamel in their composition. In their associa-  
 tions, however, flowers are quite independent, both  
 of rare qualities and peculiar beauty.

Almost all great men have loved rural seclusion,  
 and have had their favorite villa, island, arbor, or  
 garden-walk. In Switzerland, Germany, and, in-  
 deed, everywhere on the continent, these places,  
 consecrated by the partiality or endeared by the me-  
 mory of genius, are shrines for the traveler. Such  
 are Clarens, Vauluse, and Coppett. Lamartine's  
 tenderness for Milly, his childhood's home, as ex-  
 hibited in his late writings, illustrates a sentiment  
 common to all imaginative and affectionate men; but  
 it is observable that sometimes these charmed spots  
 boast no remarkable floral attractions, often only  
 sufficient to make them rural; a grove of pines, a  
 small vineyard, a picturesque view, and not infre-  
 quently a single tree—like the famous old elm at  
 Northampton, amid whose gigantic branches Dr.  
 Edwards, who wrote the celebrated treatise on the  
 Will, was accustomed to sit and meditate—any  
 truly natural object redolent of verdure and shade,  
 is enough. And the hedges of England; the moors  
 of Scotland; the terrace-gardens of Italy; the scram-  
 bling, prickly-pear fences of Sicily, and the orchards  
 of America, are attractive to the natives of each  
 country on the same principle. With the beautiful  
 distinction of flowers that, gathered into magnificent  
 horticultural shows or hidden in lonely nooks, they  
 alike address the sense of beauty, so that a little  
 sprig of forget-me-nots may excite a world of senti-  
 ment, and one scarlet geranium irradiate an entire  
 dwelling.

Flowers not only have their phenomena, but their  
 legends. The latter are usually based upon the idea  
 of a sympathetic character, as that which transforms  
 Daphne into a laurel, and changes the pale hue of a  
 flower to crimson or purple at the occurrence of  
 human shame or misfortune. Even veneration is  
 excited by the mysterious natural history of some  
 flowers, or the idea they symbolize. Thus the aloe,  
 that blossoms once in a century, and the night-bloom-  
 ing Cereus, which keeps vigil when all other flowers  
 sleep; and the Passion-flower, in which the Catho-  
 lics behold the tokens of our Saviour's agony, have  
 a kind of solemn attraction for the eye and fancy.

There is no little revelation of character in floral  
 preferences. It accords with the humanity of Burns  
 that he should celebrate the familiar daisy; with the  
 delicate organization of Shelley that a sensitive plant  
 should win his muse, and with Bryant's genuine  
 observation of nature that he dedicates a little poem  
 to an inelegant and neglected gentian. It is in har-

mony with the English idiosyncrasy and church attachments of Southey, that his most charming minor poem is in praise of the holly, the symbol of a Christian and national festival; and no poet but Crabbe would descend to so homely a vegetable product as kelp. There is no flower more peculiar in its beauty and growth than the water-lily; accordingly, Coleridge, with his metaphysical tendency to seize on rare and impressive analogies, has drawn a comparison from this flower which strikes me as one of the most poetical as well as felicitous in modern literature. Speaking of the zest for new truth felt by those already well instructed, as compared with the indifferent mental appetite of the ignorant, he says, "The water-lily, in the midst of water, opens its leaves and expands its petals at the first pattering of the shower, and rejoices in the rain-drops with a quicker sympathy than the parched shrub in the sandy desert." The dreamy, half-sensuous and half-ideal nature of Tennyson, is naturally attracted by the sweet ravishment innate in the breath and juices of some flowers. He is fitted keenly to appreciate the luxurious indolence and fanciful ecstasy thus induced; and, therefore, one of the most effective and original of his poems is "The Lotus Eaters." Moore's famous image of the sunflower is a constant bone of contention between horticulturists and poets; the former asserting that it does not turn round with the luminary it is supposed to adore, but is as fixed on its stalk as any other flower; and the latter declaring that the metaphor "*se non è vero, è ben trovato*."

Few plants are more graceful or versatile in contour than the fern. One can scarcely pass a group without recalling that line of Scott which so aptly describes the utter lull of the air:—

"There is no breeze upon the fern, no ripple on the lake."

And what figure of rhetoric better suggests the caprice of woman than that which has almost become proverbial since it was incorporated in his spirited verse:—

"—— variable as the shade

By the light, quivering aspen made!"

Goldsmith's sympathy with the rural and the human is associated intimately with the hawthorn, "for whispering lovers made." Rosemary has been more emblematic of remembrance, since it was so offered by the "fair Ophelia;" and heart's-ease is consecrated by the elegant compliment to "the virgin throned by the West," to which it is indebted for the name of "love-in-idleness." The epicurean utilitarianism of Leigh Hunt recognized "comfort" in the feel of a geranium leaf; and who that has read with appreciation Miss Barrett's fine poem, elaborating the beautiful sentiment of the Bible, "He giveth his beloved sleep," can see a poppy, that gorgeous emblem of the drowsy god, without a benison on the thoughtful lyrist? I think that the

yellow broom must have originally flourished in lonely places. For hours, I followed a mule-path in the most deserted part of Sicily, cheerful with its blossoms, whose rich yet delicate odor embalmed the air; hence the significance of Shakspeare's allusion to this flower, "which the dismissed bachelor loves, being lass-lorn." Campbell must have had an oppressive sense of the poisonous horror of nightshade, from his reference to it in the protest against skepticism as the natural companion of dismay. I have always thought the thistle an apposite symbol, not only of Scotland, but of her martyred queen—"its fragrant down set round with thorns, and rifled by the bee."

One of the most popular tales of the day—"Picciola"—is based upon the interest which a single flower may excite when it is the sole companion of a prisoner; and the favor this little romance has enjoyed, proves how natural is the sentiment it unfolds. The most serenely religious minds, however indifferent to art or scenery, are not infrequently alive to this feeling; the constant allusion to flowers, in a metaphorical way, in the Scriptures; the rich poetical meaning attached to them in the East; the lily that always appears in pictures of the Annunciation; the palm-leaves strewed in our Saviour's path; the crown of thorns woven for his brow, and his declaration of the field lilies, "that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them"—indicating that his pure eyes had momentarily rested on their familiar beauty—lend to such persons a hallowed sense of their attractiveness. There is yet another reason for this exception to a prosaic view of what is merely charming in itself, which those disposed to bigotry make in favor of flowers. It is, that they symbolize immortality. No common figure of speech is more impressive to the peasant than that which bids him see a "type of resurrection and second birth," in the germination of the seed, its growth, development, and blossoming. Again, too, there are the associations of childhood, whose first and most innocent acquisitions were gathered flowers, emblems of its own exuberance, offerings of its primitive love. I imagine the sense of color—now regarded as a separate and very unequally distributed faculty—is one of the earliest developed; it explains the intense gratification even of an infant at the sight of a tulip; and there is reason to believe that the hues of flowers are the most vivid tokens of enjoyment that greet the dawning mind.

The orientals, adepts in voluptuous ease, place vases of flowers around their fountains; and, as they lie upon divans, their eyes close, in the refreshing siesta, with these radiant sentinels for the last image to blend with their dreams, and their odor to mingle with the misty spray and cheer their waking. The Greek maidens dropped flowers from their windows on those that passed, to indicate their scorn, praise, or love. One of the poetic touches which redeem the frugal lot of the grisettes, is the habit they indulge of keeping a box of mignonette on their window-sills. You may see them at dawn bending over

it, to sprinkle the roots or enjoy the perfume. In Tuscany and the Neapolitan territory, peasants wear gay flowers in their hats; while the more grave people of the intervening country rarely so adorn themselves. I was struck, at the wedding of an American in France, to see the servants, tearful at parting with their mistress, decorating the interior of her carriage with white flowers. There is something, however, very artificial in the dry *immortels*, here and there dyed black, for sale at the gates of Pere la Chaise, and bought by the humbler class of mourners to hang on the crosses that mark the graves of kindred. Our own rural cemeteries are teaching a better lesson. The culture of flowers in such domains, is not only in excellent taste, but, when judiciously selected and arranged, a grateful memorial. At Monaco, a town in Italy, a few years since, the body of a young child was covered with flowers, according to the custom of the place; and when sought for the purpose of interment, it was found sitting up and playing with the flowers—an affecting and beautiful evidence of the ignorance of death characteristic of that spotless age.

Fashion seldom interferes with nature without diminishing her grace and efficiency. It denudes the masculine face of the beard, its distinctive feature; substitutes for the harmonious movement of the chaste and blithesome dance, the angular caprices of the polka; clips and squares the picturesque in landscape into formalized proportions; and condemns half the world to an unattractive and inconvenient costume. Even flowers seem profaned by its touch; there is something morbid in their breath when exhaled profusely in gorgeous saloons and ostentatiously displayed at a heartless banquet; and wisely as the florist may adjust them into bouquets, they are so firmly entwined and intricately massed together, as often to resemble mosaic. We turn often from the most costly specimen of this appanage of the ball and opera, with a feeling of relief to the single white rosebud on a maiden's breast, or the light jasmin wreath on her brow. The quantity and showy combination of the flowers, especially the heated atmosphere and commonplace gabble of the scene, and often the want of correspondence between the person who so consciously holds the bouquet in her gloved hand and the sweet nature it represents, rob the flowers of their legitimate claim. Indeed, like all truly beautiful things, they demand the appropriate as a sphere. The east wind, in Boston, on the last national holiday, and the grave faces of the children, to say nothing of the idea that approbateness and acquisitiveness were the organs mainly called in play in their little overworked brains, utterly dispelled all genuine romance and grateful illusion from the floral procession. Something analogous in character, atmosphere, and occasion, is needed to render the ministry of flowers affecting and complete.

We instinctively identify our acquaintances with flowers. The meek and dependent are as lilies of the valley, and, like them, need the broad and ver-

dant shield of affectionate nurture; sycophants are parasites; exuberant and glowing beauty and feeling are more like the damask rose than anything in nature; the irritable annoy us like nettles; the proud emulate the crown imperial; the graceful are lithe as vine-sprays; the loving wind around our hearts like tendrils; and the cheerful brighten the dim background of life like the scarlet blossoms of the woodbine. Not a flower in the cornucopia of the floral goddess but hath its similitude and its votary. The boy's first miracle is to press the seed-vessels of the balsamine till it snaps at his touch; or shouts, as he runs from bed to the garden, at the sight of the rich chalice of the morning-glory, planted by his own little hand, that has opened while he slept. The clover's pink globe, and the deep crimson bloom of the sumac; the exquisite scent of the locust, and the auspicious blooming of the lilac; the hood-like purple of the fox-glove, and the dainty tint of the sweet pea, stir, whenever they reappear, those dormant memories of early and unalloyed consciousness, which

“ — neither man nor boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy  
Can utterly abolish or destroy.”

Thus, from the first, perverted moral, thou wert indebted to flowers;—as a wayward urchin, loitering on the way to school, thou whistled shrilly against the edge of a grass-blade, held a butter-cup to the chin of thy little comrade, or puffed away the feathery seed-blossom of the dandelion to ascertain if thy secret wish would be consummated; as a youth, with quivering pulses and flushed brow, thou wert not ashamed to seek the choicest flowers as interpreters of thy feelings towards one before whom thy words were tremulous, yet fond; and in thy prime, when positive knowledge and accurate deduction constituted thy felicity, it was, or might have been, to thee a rational pastime to study the botanical relations, laws, and habits of these poetic effusions of the earth; causing them to gratify thee through analysis, as they once did through sentiment. And “in that Indian summer of the soul,” that descends on frosty age, how do flowers serve as the magic connecting bond that unites senility and childhood! The eye of age softens as it beholds the shower of blossoms from the fruit-trees, thinks of its own flowery day, and is thankful for a serene maturity. Thus have flowers an utterance everywhere and always; the wild columbine, on its thread-like stem, that hangs on the stony cliff; the fungus, that swells from the mouldering trunk of gigantic forest-trees; the tropical exotics of the stuff, that almost bewilder in their strange beauty; and the buds that open beneath Alpine snows, address our sense of adventure, of wonder, and of gentleness, in quiet, yet persuasive appeals, that sometimes we cannot choose but heed.

The fondness of the Dutch for tulips, it may be conjectured, is partly owing to the flatness of their country, as well as its alluvial soil; the absence of

picturesque variety in form, inducing a craving for the most vivid sensations from color. Perhaps the compactness and neat growth of bulbous roots, so adapted to their cleanly and well-arranged domicils, somewhat accounts for the exquisite degree of cultivation to which they bring this species of flowers. It is one characteristic advantage of such natural ornaments, that a few well selected, or even one in a room or in the midst of a grass-plot, will diffuse refreshment and excite imagination. Thus the flowers that cluster on the roofs of Genoa, and the little knot of violets imbedded in geranium leaves dispensed by the flower-girls in Tuscany, are more pleasing than if the display were greater. On revisiting a city of the latter State, after years of absence, as I followed the lagging porter who carried my luggage, in the twilight of early morning, I was startled by a cordial exclamation, "*Ben tornato, O ben tornato, signore!*" and looking down a narrow street, I saw the flower-girl from whom I had so long ago been accustomed to purchase, gayly advancing with a bouquet. It was a welcome such as awaits the traveler in few countries, and one which touched the heart with cheerful augury. There is, indeed, something in flowers redolent of hope and suggestive of amity. Their very universality renders them eloquent of greeting. The fair, maternal bosom of Titian's Flora has a significance beyond that which artists recognize; it proclaims Nature as a beneficent parent, lavishly dispensing the flowers that strew life's rugged path with sweet monitions and grateful refreshment. How, in the season of vivid emotion, has the unexpected sight of a pale crocus, bursting from the mould in early spring; the teeming odor of a magnolia, tossed on a summer breeze; or the green flakes of a larch, powdered with snowy crystal in the winter sun, kindled the very frame with a kind of mysterious delight! There is, to the poetical sense, a ravishing prophecy and winsome intimation in flowers, that now and then, from the influence of mood or circumstance, re-asserts itself like the reminiscence of childhood or the spell of love. Then we realize that they are the survivors of our lost paradise; the types of what is spontaneous, inspiring, and unprofaned in life and humanity; the harbingers of a blissful futurity. It was, therefore, in a rational as well as a fanciful spirit, that trees were consecrated into emblems and auguries; that the willow, in its meek flexibility, was made the insignia of desertion; the cypress, in its solemn and dense foliage, of death; the enduring amaranth, of immortality; and the classic-shaped and bright, green leaves of the laurel, of fame. Not only in their native traits, but in their almost sympathetic habits, flowers come near our affections. How patiently the ivy binds the disjointed stones of a ruined edifice, and the moss creeps over the gray and time-stained roots and rocks, as if to cover their decay and relieve their sterility! With what a wreathing protection clusters the woodbine round the humble porch! The field flowers, some one has truly said, smile up to us as children to the face of

a father; and the seeds of those destined for birds, fly on innumerable wings of down, to germinate the more abundantly. The warm hues of the dahlia would be oppressive in any other season than autumn; and the glitter of the ocean's strand is chastened by the gay weeds whose variegated tints are freshened by every wave that dies along the beach. Even this herbal, the repository of memorials gleaned from hallowed scenes, or treasured as the fragile trophies of joys as fragile, "strikes the electric chain" of imagination and memory with a deeper vibration than a sketch-book or a diary. That little cluster of thin, pale, green leaves, with a shade of delicate brown at the edges (called by the Italians the Hair of Venus), which clings to the page as if painted on its surface, once hung from the dark, rocky wall of the remarkable cavern in Syracuse, called the Ear of Dionysius; and as I look upon it, the deserted bay, crumbling tombs, and wreck-strewn *campagna* of that ancient site, are vividly before me; even the flavor of the Hybla honey and the echo of the mule's tramp return to my senses. This weed, so common in shape and hue that it needs a reminiscence to justify its preservation, was plucked as I stood tip-toe on the edge of a gondola, and held fast to old Antonio's shoulder, while he checked his oar beneath the Bridge of Sighs, and I snatched it from the interstices of the arch. The Piazza of San Marco; the Adriatic, glowing with the flush of sunset; the lonely canals, and all the gray quietude of Venice, are conjured by the withered memento, "as at the touch of an enchanter's wand." More costly acquisitions have yielded less zest in the winning than this slender yellow flower, which, evading the jealous watchfulness of the guard at Pompeii, I gathered to assure myself thenceforth that I had actually walked the streets of the buried city. How venerable seems this bunch of grass and flowers that drew its sustenance from the loamy walls of the Colosseum; and with how marvelous a freshness do I call up the medieval architecture, exquisite *campanile*, and mountain boundaries of Florence, beholding again the anemone purloined on a fine Sabbath morning in the gardens of the Boboli! I cannot see this cassia blossom without feeling a certain impulsion to monastic life, as I think of the kind friars, the noble organ, lava-heaped confines and soothing retirement of the Benedectine convent, at Cattania, whence I bore it as the memento of one of those white days in the traveler's experience, that atone for a thousand discomforts. Pleasant was the summer evening, at Messina, when, in one of the palaces that line the *marina*, we kept gay vigil in order to witness the blooming of this faded cereus; and high beat the pulses of an entranced multitude on the night this faded nosegay was pressed to the lips of Amina, in that last *scena*, when her voice quivered with uncontrollable feeling, and caroled the "*Ah, non giungo*," in tones of such pathetic delight as brought a tear to the sternest eye. I will not throw away this rusty-looking japonica, but keep it as a talisman to guard me from the facina-

tion of heartless beauty, reflecting on the character of the brilliant —, in whose dark hair it rested during the last ball of her triumphant season; that bewitching face displaying every phase of expression, while not one look was inspired by a soul, any more than this flower, in its graceful prime, was imbued with fragrance. Far different is the association that endears the scarlet honeysuckle and white hollyhock beside it. Through peaceful hours, that overflowed with unuttered tenderness and an ecstatic sense of geniality and recognition, I watched beside one I loved, the humming-bird and the bee sipping the nectar from their chalices, and compared the luxurious pastime with my own. Nor will I cease to treasure this orange-blossom, given me by the dark-eyed Palermitan, in the grove of her father's domain, when the air was filled with the odor of the sweet south, and musical with the far-off chime of the vesper-bells. The scent of this grape-blossom is associated with the hospitality of a villa, below Fiesole; and that heliotrope makes me think of a fair invalid with whom I wandered among the ilexes of a palace-garden, in whose grassy walks the vanilla flower grew profusely. I saved the reedy leaf that is stitched to the opposite page, as one of the countless proofs of the thoughtful care of my motherly hostess, at —. She stuck it in my window on Palm Sunday. When gleaned, in a field near Lucca, this little flax-blossom held a dew-drop, and looked like the tearful blue eye of a child. Arid as it is, the pink, star-like flower beneath, whispers of romance. At a pic-nic, a friend of mine, who has an extreme impatience of tenter-hooks, determined to have his position with a certain fair one defined, as, after some encouragement, she seemed half-inclined for another. With true feminine tact, she had avoided an interview, though they constantly met. I believe she either could not decide between the two, or hated to give up my friend. He laughingly proposed, while we were resting in a meadow, to make his favorite a sybil; and handed her a knot of these starry flowers, to pluck the leaves one by one, and reveal the hearts of the company, according to a familiar game. When the time came to apply the test to her own sentiments,

she was visibly embarrassed. He fixed his calm eye upon her face; and I, knowing at once his delicacy and his superstition, felt that this was a crisis. The lovely creature's voice trembled, when, half petulantly, and with visible disappointment, she plucked away the last leaf, which proved her only his well-wisher. The omen was accepted, and my friend soon had

“ — a rougher task in hand  
Than to drive liking to the name of love.”

Flowers are the most unobjectionable and welcome of gifts. There is a delicacy in selecting an offering, whether of gratitude, kindness, or affection, that sometimes puzzles a considerate mind; but where any such hesitancy occurs, we can turn to flowers with complacency. Nature furnishes them, and all her beautiful products may bravely challenge fastidiousness. No human being, not utterly perverted, can scorn flowers; nor can they be offered, even to the spoiled child of fortune, without an implied compliment to taste. The fairest of Eve's daughters, and the proudest scion of nobility, as well as the village beauty; the most gifted and the least cultivated, provided either imagination or heart exists, <sup>must</sup> feel gratified at such a tribute, whether from dependent or equal, new acquaintance or faithful lover. Like all spontaneous attractions, that of flowers gives them immunity from ordinary rules. They are so lovely and so frail, that, like children, they bespeak indulgence ere they offend. Of all material things, they excite the most chivalric sentiment; and hence are given and received, scattered and woven, cultivated and gathered, worn and won, with a more generous and refined spirit than any other ornaments. They are radiant hieroglyphics, sculptured on the earth's bosom; perhaps the legacy of angels; but certainly overflowing with messages of love that are apart from the work-day scenes and prosaic atmosphere of common life, and allied to better moments; to the sweet episodes of existence, to the promises of faith, and the memories of youth; and hence they are consecrated, and, like “the quality of mercy,” bless “him that gives and her that takes.”

## IDEAL HUSBANDS; OR, SCHOOL-GIRL FANCIES.

BY MRS. JOSEPH C. NEAL.

### CHAPTER I.

Miss Juliet Capulet was mistaken. There is undoubtedly *much* in a name.—*Charcoal Sketches.*

True love is at home on a carpet,  
And mightily likes his ease;  
True love has an eye for a dinner,  
And starves under shady trees.

LET me usher you, without ceremony, dear ladies, into No. 20, a commodious apartment on the first floor of a wayside inn. It is undoubtedly the pleasantest room in the house, and, at this moment, is enlivened by the presence of two young and beautiful girls. There are huge traveling trunks and carpet-bags, yawning wide-mouthed; for the ladies are just completing the fatiguing process of packing. Thus far they have journeyed in company, but here their paths separate; and as they have been room-mates at school for two years, you can imagine there is *much* to be said on both sides.

"Clara," said the younger, a bright-eyed maiden "just seventeen," "isn't it time to dress? The stage leaves in an hour, I heard the waiter say. You do my hair, and then I'll braid yours. We shall not have a chance to play waiting-maid for each other very soon again."

"True; but don't forget your promise, that I am to be your bridesmaid," was the reply.

"Nonsense," said the other—blushing, nevertheless, as young girls will when the subject is thus brought home to them; "you will need my services first, Cara. You are older than I."

"But you are prettier than I, Ella."

"You flatterer!" and the curls Ella had gathered over her little white hands were suffered to fall carelessly about her friend's face.

"Besides," continued Clara Howard, "you are an heiress; and I"—her red lip curled scornfully—"I am dependent upon a stepfather for the very necessaries of existence."

"How can you say 'dependent' so bitterly, when you know how kindly he speaks of you, and loves you, I am sure?"

"Yes, I know he loves me; but his own large family are to be provided for; and so, you see, puss, I lack one of the essential qualifications to the estate matrimonial. What were you telling me about Mr. Huntington? I was so busy then."

"Oh, only Frank says he will join our party (I can say *our* party this year) at the Mountain House; and, you know, I have wanted to meet him so long. I wonder if he will like me?" she added, musingly.

"He is certain to do so, if he once sees you. And, Ella, I declare, you are half in love with him already. Your sister evidently thinks him perfection."

"You know he was her husband's friend for years, Cara; and—I wonder how he looks," the young girl said, abruptly. "Strange, Agnes has never described him to me."

"She wishes you to be surprised. I have no doubt he is a splendid fellow."

"Oh, he must be. Tall—yes, I am sure he is tall. I never could endure short men. Then, he has jet black whiskers and a moustache. And his hair must wave; not curl, but wave a little over his brow. He must have a beautiful mouth, too, or I am sure I could not like him. Clara, positively, I never *could* marry a man who was not tall and graceful, with dark eyes and whiskers, and a perfect mouth. Yes, and an aristocratic name he must have, too, or I never could consent to change my own for his. 'Ella Kirkland' is far too pretty to be lost in Smith, or Jones, or Thompson. Let me think: Huntington—it's a beautiful name, isn't it?"

"Yes, Ella Huntington is not so bad. But I don't care a fig for a name, so a man is wealthy. I believe I would marry plain John Jones, if he was as ugly as poor Jackson with his red hair and weak eyes, provided plain John Jones had five thousand a year."

"Oh, Clara, don't talk in that way; I know you are only joking. But then——"

"No, I'm not joking," retorted the other, firmly, almost fiercely.

Poor girl! she is not the only woman of her age who considers wealth an essential to domestic happiness. She had been reared with luxurious tastes and habits; but the wealth that supplied the one and fostered the other, had not been her own; and the taunts of her mother's step-children had only created a desire for a fortune under her own control, that she might outshine those who were her superiors only in the wealth she so coveted. But Clara Howard is not our heroine, beautiful as she certainly was, and amiable as she might have been but for this plague-spot that burned upon her heart. We will bid her farewell, as did her late schoolmate, at the door of the splendid equipage long waiting for the "little heiress," a *sobriquet* Ella had borne through her residence at the seminary of Madame Simila.

Clara Howard's red lip curled once more, as a lumbering stage-coach soon after took its place. It was to bear her to the next large town, where her stepfather awaited her.

So we turn from Clara's scheming heart, that



plans only how it may fetter itself with golden chains, to the bounding hopes and bright anticipations Ella Kirkland is now pouring into the ear of Frank Clinton, the husband of her only sister Agnes. She was talking of Mr. Huntington as they rode along. She should be *so* delighted to meet him! Was he tall?

"Yes."

"And fine looking?"

Ella was bidden to prepare for a disappointment.

"Then he is ugly, after all?"

No; her brother did not say that; but she would not meet Mr. Huntington, at least this season. He had, "unfortunately, been obliged——"

Ella did not wait to hear any more. "It was too bad, after all sister had written!" It was strange how soon Ella grew weary after this, though scarcely one-third of their way was passed. She did not tell Mr. Clinton all that she had been intending to; about their examination, and how her new songs had been so much admired; and that Clara Howard must be invited to pass the winter with them. However, that recalled their last conversation, and then she repeated it to—a part of it, at least; for she did not tell of her "trying on" Mr. Huntington's name, to her amused and patient listener.

"So, my little Ella would never, positively *never*, marry a man by the name of Smith. What would she think of Brown?"

"Oh, horrid! that was quite as bad. No; she was willing to repeat it: if a man was ever so rich," (though, to be sure, that made little difference,) "or ever so tall" (a much more important consideration in the eyes of the little lady), "or ever so handsome or intellectual, those horrid names, Brown, or Smith, or Jones, would outweigh his attractions." She wondered how Clara *could* think so much of money. *Wealth* was nothing; but *her* future lord *must* have an aristocratic name.

How merrily Frank Clinton laughed; and then Ellen pouted; and at last he grew thoughtful, and she grew stupid; so, as if by mutual consent, they fell back on the soft cushions, and neither spoke for miles of that pleasant journey.

## CHAPTER II.

The parlors, both, are occupied,  
And every other spot,  
By couples who a-courting seem,  
And yet perhaps they're not.—*Miss Leslie.*

THERE was a gay group assembled in the drawing-room at the Catskill Mountain House, on the evening after Ella Kirkland's arrival. The house was thronged with visitors; and, as usual, gossip and flirtation formed the principal amusement of the crowds thus gathered together for the laudable purpose of killing time.

Mrs. Clinton passed quietly through the larger room, and entered the little *boudoir*, which all who

have visited this most delightful summer resort must recollect. Ah! how many flirtations has that mirror witnessed! How many a flushed cheek has been shaded by those light muslin curtains! How many a restless heart, filled with hope, mortification, ay, even *despair*, has throbbled against those soft lounges, that reveal no secrets!—fortunately for the peace of mind of some we wot of. Ella did not think of this as she entered the room; but she was a young lady entering society for the first time, unshackled by the thoughts of a return to school duties, and everything was novel and delightful. She looked around with eager interest, as Mrs. Clinton pointed out her acquaintances in the room beyond.

"There is Mrs. McClure," said Agnes, "the lady with the quiet, thoughtful face, and braided hair. You will like her, I know. She is still in mourning for her husband, who died several years since; and those little fairies bidding her good-night are her children. Mrs. Newland is at the other end of the sofa; she is her sister, a widow also; but her daughters are older, quite young ladies. There is one of them at the piano. She is ladylike, quiet, and self-possessed. A widow content to remain so, though in the prime of life. There is Mr. Dickson, an unassuming and gentlemanly man. Mrs. Orton, the poetess, is now in conversation with him. Is she not a graceful little creature?"

Ella looked with admiration on one she had heard so much of, and whose writings she had loved from childhood.

"I will finish my catalogue to-morrow," continued Mrs. Clinton. "No, stop; there comes Bradbury; you must know him. One of the best fellows in the world; high-principled, warm-hearted, generous to a fault. Somewhat extravagant, I fear, and a little vain; but these are faults of youth which he will have good sense enough to conquer as he grows older. And here is the greatest curiosity in the whole menagerie. Not a lion, exactly—a bear would answer better; that is, I am always tempted to think of Fredrika Bremer's 'Bear,' in her charming 'Neighbors,' whenever I see him; so, you see, the epithet is a compliment, after all. Did you not notice Frank rush down when the stage came in? Well, it was to meet that man who sits so contentedly gazing in at the window from the piazza; his feet perched up on the top of the railing *à la Americane*. Respectable feet they are, too, for a man of his size. He must be at least six feet in height. He is a great friend of Frank's; and a new-comer, as well as yourself. You would find his name on the register just below yours, as Walter Brown, of Arkansas. Is not that enough to startle one! Such a backwoodsman! But I will leave you to find out his "points and paces," as the sportsmen say, yourself. You will be sure to like him."

"Impossible!" said Ella, hastily. "I never could endure the name. Besides, he must be a perfect savage, coming from such a place. What *can* Frank find to like in him? Such a name! *Brown!* I

wonder if he will ever find any one to marry him?"

"Report says that one lady has already been so rash—that he is a widower; but he denies it. Report adds that he is looking out for some one to fill her place. He would probably deny that, too, if it came to his ears. A chance for you, Ella, if it is true."

"Horrid!" said Ella, scornfully. "*I* marry a man with the name of *Brown*!"

"Good evening, Mrs. Clinton," said a voice near them.

Ella started, as if a whole Fourth of July of fireworks had suddenly exploded at her feet. She had turned away while they were talking, and had not seen any one approaching them. There stood Mr. Brown, within a yard of the sofa on which she was lounging. Her face flushed in an instant. Had he overheard her remark? She hoped not; but she could not tell. He was quite self-possessed; and, after an introduction, seated himself near her, although he addressed his conversation to Mrs. Clinton.

"Dear me, how ugly he is!" she thought; for though his intonation was perfect and his voice was musical, no one could deny that it came from a large, very large, mouth. Then his forehead was sunburned; and his nose, though not badly shaped, had an undue tinge of "love's proper hue," from like exposure. Besides, as a tall man, he was certainly not strikingly graceful—at least in repose.

Ella rose to obey her brother's summons to the piano. She sang simple ballads, with much expression; and Frank was fond of ballad singing, particularly in contrast to the "opera gems" the city ladies were constantly strumming. Frank had little love for Bellini and Donizetti out of the opera-house. At any rate, not as performed by boarding-school misses.

Not once did Mr. Brown look up. Provoking Mr. Brown! Although Ella well knew, from his very face, that he could not have a particle of music in him. He sat quite still, apparently absorbed in admiration of the large filbert-shaped nails of his really tolerable hand. Every one else crowded around the piano, and thanked the fair musician; for, although Ella's voice was neither brilliant nor powerful, there was a peculiar freshness of style, and a freedom from affectation in voice and intonation that pleased those who could also admire and appreciate more elaborate execution.

So Ella sang on, urged by Mr. Bradbury and Mr. Dickson, who had been presented to her by Frank. And then they all went out upon the piazza together, and strolled up and down in the soft moonlight—all but Mr. Brown, who engaged Mrs. McClure in an animated conversation, and did not even glance up at the window as the group outside passed and repassed. Ella was glad of this, for somehow she had taken an unaccountable dislike to Mr. Brown.

## CHAPTER III.

### "Sunrise upon the hills!"

Love may slumber in a maiden's heart, but he always dreams.—*Jean Paul*.

THOSE of our readers who have had the good fortune to watch a clear sunrise from the piazza of the Mountain House, will not wonder that our little heroine stood absorbed in the view before her.

She was quite alone, for Mrs. Clinton had become more fond of her morning nap than of watching a scene grown familiar. Her husband had fulfilled his promise of calling Ella in season; and he, too, loved morning dreams.

A group of new arrivals stood a few rods from the house, upon the dew-covered grass; but Frank had forbidden his charge to set foot beside them on pain of a heavy cold. So Ella stood there as pretty a picture as one could wish to see, with one arm twined about a pillar, and her light morning-dress fluttering in graceful drapery about her; but, rapt in quiet admiration of the slowly changing scene, she did not once dream of how she was looking, and wondered why the gentlemen of the aforesaid party turned so often toward the house.

Slowly the crimson rays stole to the heart of the dim clouds that rested on the crest of far-away Mount Washington. First, a faint rose-tinge trembled through the ragged edges; deeper, richer grew the radiance, until all glorious hues were blended in its inmost folds. A golden light played o'er the bending horizon; a mellow radiance that faded at last to faintest sapphire. So day came on, proudly, rejoicingly. The vapory masses that filled the valley below, trembled as the first sunbeams fell among them; and then fled, like a discomfited host pierced by the glittering lances of an enemy. Miles away the beautiful Hudson sparkled and dashed its mimic waves on sloping, wood-crowned banks; and near them the proud summits of the Catskills became more distinctly defined against a cloudless sky.

"Heavens! how beautiful!" murmured the young girl, as she gazed eagerly upward and around. There was such a freshness in the clear atmosphere, such a "subtle luxury" in its very breath! She did not know that it had deepened the rose tint on her cheeks, and given a clear brightness to her large dark eyes; and when a voice near her echoed "Beautiful, indeed!" she little dreamed that *she* was the object of such enthusiasm.

But it startled her, mellow as was the tone; and she turned hastily to see—Mr. Brown! standing near.

For an instant, she was vexed. If it had been Mr. Bradbury, now, such an interruption would have been far from disagreeable; or Mr. Dickson, even. Her heart was so full, that she longed to give vent to her rapture in words; but disagreeable Mr. Brown, of all people, to come between her and that glorious sunrise!

However, he came forward so frankly to bid her good morning, and spoke so charmingly of the different atmospheric effects about them; and, withal, displayed unconsciously so much artistic skill and taste, that Ella could not but be interested in the conversation; and so an hour passed quite swiftly, and she was surprised to hear the dressing-bell ring so suddenly. As she bade Mr. Brown good morning, and turned to her own room, she came to the conclusion that he was a professional artist; but then the arts are not particularly cherished in Arkansas.

Mrs. Clinton was confined to her room that morning by a slight indisposition. Frank sat beside her, as a kind husband should do, reading aloud from a new romance. Ella had hurried through it the week before; so, as all the rest of the household seemed to have gone to the falls or to their rooms, she stole off to the drawing-room, resolved to have what school-girls call "a good practice." Fortunately, it was empty; and, unrestrained by listeners, Ella gave full scope to her bird-like voice, singing anything she chanced to remember—among other simple strains, the sweet ballad of "Bonnie Annie Lowrie." As she finished the refrain, Mr. Brown came slowly forward from the little boudoir we have before spoken of.

Ella blushed—vexed at having had a listener to her wild cadenzas—half rose from the music-stool, and then sat down again, turning over nervously a song of Jenny Lind's that was open before her.

"There is one consolation," thought she; "he is no musician, and will not know whether I have been singing false or not."

Sadly mistaken was Ella Kirkland; and so she found, when Mr. Brown spoke of "Annie Lowrie," and begged her to sing it once more. Then they chatted of Scotch and Irish songs, of Moore's melodies, and Mrs. Norton's delightful ballads. It was very strange he liked all her old favorites; and, at last, as she was playing "Fairy Bells," her astonishment reached its climax as he joined her carelessly with a most agreeable tenor. Then he suggested some little alterations in her style and tone; and so they sang and chatted a long time—Ella was surprised to find how long, as she looked at her watch on her way to Mrs. Clinton's room.

Yet she was vexed at her sister's raillery when recounting the adventures of the morning, and wondered how she could dream of teasing her about any one named Brown, and with no mustache either! Mr. Brown had not even whiskers! Then such a mouth! No; Ella declared that, until the legislature had done something for his name, and surgical science had found a method for improving ugly mouths, her heart was in no danger.

So she changed the topic of conversation, by inquiring how long they were going to stay among the mountains, and why Mr. Huntington did not join them. It was too provoking! Mr. Huntington seemed to elude her, as if he had been Peter Schlemihl himself! No sooner did she expect to meet

him, than, presto! something must happen to disturb their plans. Her sister smiled, probably at her pettish tone; but pettishness was not an unpleasant expression on Ella's face; her eyes seemed always to grow brighter, and her red lips pouted so *kissably*—at least, so Frank always said.

Thus interrogated, Mrs. Clinton replied that their stay would be four weeks at least; for she certainly found it the coolest place they had visited that season; and the house was well kept, the company decidedly *recherché*. As to Mr. Huntington, all was doubtful; he might not make his appearance at all, or, if he came, it would probably be the very last week of their stay. Then she went on to praise Mr. Huntington, his fine intellect, taste, and address. Moreover, his firm principles and great moral excellence had been well tested in their long and intimate friendship. Mrs. Clinton did not say, but she hinted how happy it would make them all to see Ellen the wife of such a man; and her listener's heart beat fast; for—shall we let you into Ella's secrets?—she had long loved an ideal Mr. Huntington. For two years past, her sister's letters had spoken of their friend in no measured terms of praise; and, unconsciously to herself, he had become "her thought by day, her dream by night."

"Very improper!" whispers some prudish maiden. But, lady, woman's heart craves an object for its affection; and better let it be wasted upon a noble ideal than a worthless, characterless reality, as "first lovers" oftentimes prove.

This will explain Ella's sore disappointment at not meeting Mr. Huntington, and why she listened with so much pleasure to her sister's praise.

As she stood before her mirror that afternoon, braiding her heavy hair, she caught a glimpse of her face shaded by its wealth of tresses, and wondered if Mr. Huntington would think her pretty. Then she recollected that Mrs. Clinton had not yet described him, and she resolved to ask a portrait that very evening. "But, of course," thought Ella, "he has magnificent dark eyes; and such a noble forehead! I do hope he is tall!" for Ella, like most ladies of medium height, had rather a peculiar admiration for tall gentlemen.

When they all re-assembled at the dinner-table, Ella found the seat next her assigned to Mr. Brown. At first, it made her a little uncomfortable; but his sparkling conversation soon put her at ease; and, at last, the large mouth grew more tolerable in consideration of the sweet voice and witty sayings. That evening, too, she found herself turning away from Mr. Dickson's quiet sarcasm, and Mr. Bradbury's good-natured comments on the assembled crowd, to listen again while Mr. Brown spoke of foreign lands in contrast with our own. He had already traveled much, and his descriptions were absolutely word-paintings. Besides, he seemed to have a wonderful knowledge of the world in its social aspect. This was betrayed quite naturally in the course of conversation with Frank Clinton. There was no ostentation of knowledge or pursuit;

his friend knew well how to guide the current of conversation, and Mr. Brown seemed quite unconscious that he was so led. He rarely addressed Ella, but now and then he would turn suddenly toward her for sympathy with some noble sentiment, or approval of some graphic sketch; and, without knowing how well pleased she was, our heroine sat in a quiet, happy mood, wondering at his extensive information, and smiling at his lively sallies.

So passed the first day at the Mountain House; and so passed the next, and the next; varied now and then with a walk, a ride, a visit to the falls, or a merry bowling party. Ella had never been so happy before. She had almost ceased to wish for Mr. Huntington's presence, and actually reproached herself at the indifference with which she listened to Frank's wonders at the cause of his long detention.

#### CHAPTER IV.

*Juliet.*                Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for that name which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.

*Romeo.*                I take thee at thy word.  
Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized,  
Henceforth, I never will be Romeo.

THEY were standing by the piano, quite alone, Ella and Mr. Brown. Almost unconsciously, they had fallen into a habit of practicing directly after breakfast, when new visitors were gone to the falls, and the older guests sought their own rooms, or strolled up and down on the long, well-shaded piazza. Mr. Brown's voice harmonized so well with Ella's, and their duets were pronounced quite charming. With singing in the morning, chatting at dinner, bowling, dancing and walking together, they had become very good friends.

There is no place in which one grows well acquainted with character so soon as at the Mountain House. There is no other family to associate with; you do not care always to join in the society of the house; and so one's party become thoroughly well known to each other—far better known than by months of fashionable city visiting. Mr. Brown had attached himself to Frank Clinton's party; and in all excursions where escort was needed, Ella fell to his care. What at first was accident, became a matter of course. Quiet Mrs. McClure yielded her place next Ella, at his approach; Mr. Dickson and Mr. Bradbury tacitly assented to the *tête-à-tête* arrangement in rides and rambles; Frank Clinton and his wife smiled at the growing intimacy; but did not attempt to discountenance it. Mrs. Clinton well knew that her sister was in love with an ideal; she seemed to have no fear of so plain a reality as Mr. Brown.

And Ella?—she began to expect his approach whenever he entered the room. She illy concealed her disappointment if their practice hour was broken in upon; she did not dream that she was deeply interested—only Mr. Brown had grown endurable.

He was not so very ugly, after all. So she thought the morning of which I speak, as they stood there in animated conversation.

"This will be our last practice for some time," said Mr. Brown, at length.

"And why?" asked Ella, hastily.

"I leave this afternoon," was the reply, "and my return is uncertain."

"Must you go?" said Ella, poutingly, beseechingly.

There was more in these few words, and in the tone in which they were spoken, than Ella herself was aware of; but they thrilled on the ear of the listener.

"I have an only sister," said Mr. Brown, speaking in a low voice; "I have not seen her for more than a year, and she has just arrived in the Caladonia. I must go to New York to meet her."

"Is she young? Is she beautiful? How you must love her!" murmured Ella, rather thinking than speaking.

"She is both young and beautiful; not a day older than yourself, I imagine. Yes, I am very, very fond of her. She is the idol of our home circle. Rough as I am, even I have a pet name for her. We were speaking of pet names yesterday, you recollect."

Yes, Ella recollected it distinctly. She had been repeating to him Mrs. Osgood's sweet little song, "Call me Pet Names, dearest."

"What dainty diminutive, think you, my huge mouth can fashion for our household fairy?"

Ella did not look up, but said she could not guess.

"'Darling,' said Mr. Brown, softly; "I always call my sister *darling*! Do you like the word?"

Now, if Ella had one fancy over another, it was to be called "darling" by those who loved her. She did not like any one to call her so but those of whom she was very fond. She had never heard it so sweetly cadenced before. We have said that Mr. Brown's voice was peculiarly musical, and now there was so much of heart thrown into the lingering echo of that little word "darling!"

"I should think *you* would like it," said he, again speaking, when he found Ella neither looked up nor replied. "Forgive me, but you seem born to be petted."

And then Ella looked up, but her eyes speedily fell beneath the respectful yet earnest gaze that sent the blood crowding from her heart to cheek and lip, leaving the poor heart so faint that it could do nothing but flutter.

"We probably shall not meet alone again," said that same low voice, "so I will bid you good-by now. I hope we may see each other at some future period."

He extended his hand as he spoke, and Ella hesitatingly placed her own within its gentle clasp. "May God bless you, Miss Kirkland!" and she was standing alone.

She gained her own room, fastened the door instinctively, and then threw herself upon a low seat and buried her face in her hands. Now that tone,

that look returned again and again. "Darling! If I could but hear him speak it to me!" she murmured, at length. And then she blushed, though quite alone with her own heart. What had she wished? The love of a stranger; that dearest of pet names from so ugly a mouth! Poor child! she had made a sad discovery; she loved unsought—and worse than all, one who bore so unaristocratic a name as Brown! A man with a smooth lip and a low brow! Where were those essential mustaches? the perfect mouth that should have smiled upon her? After all, Mr. Brown's mouth had a very sweet expression, and his smile disclosed teeth of almost dazzling whiteness. His forehead was not high, but it was very pure; and his eyes, though blue—. Again the flush rose to her very brow. Was her love unsought, after all? He had not told her that she was dear to him, in words; but now, as she reviewed their daily intercourse of the past few weeks, she tried to persuade herself that he was not indifferent to her. But then he had left her so suddenly, without a word of explanation; and again all was chaos.

She scarcely looked up until Frank tapped at her door on his way to the dinner-table. She had heard the dressing-bell ring, and then she relaxed into the vague reverie which had before absorbed her; so she was still in her morning-dress.

"I have a headache; I do not wish any dinner," said she, without opening the door; and Frank, finding all expostulation vain, passed on.

Mrs. Clinton wondered what had made Ella so irritable that afternoon, and told her that Mr. Brown had been suddenly obliged to leave for the city. "Will you not go down to the drawing-room and bid him good-by?" she asked. No; Ella was obstinate, and Mrs. Clinton went alone. Ella stood, sheltered by the green blind of her window, and watched the passengers, one by one, as they bestowed themselves in the capacious stage-coach. Last of all, came a well-known form. Frank was with him. He gazed earnestly up at the window one moment; then, as if disappointed, sprang to his seat, and the carriage rattled away over its stony path.

Mrs. Clinton wondered still more at Ella's petulance, when she found how long it lasted. From being a gay, brilliant girl, the life of their pleasant evenings, she had become almost sullen in her reserve, and passed hours quite alone in her own room. Even the announcement of Mr. Huntington's expected arrival, at the end of the week, failed to rouse her. She reproached herself for it, but she could not help it. It was plain that the ideal had given place to the real.

"I suppose we shall leave for New York by Tuesday next," said Mrs. Clinton, one day, as they stood watching the stage, as it wound slowly toward the house. The coachman's bugle had roused the mountain echoes; and, as usual, all the loungers strolled to the back porch to criticise the new arrivals.

"Shall we?" said Ella, fairly roused to something like animation. "I'm very glad of it."

"I declare, Ella, you are a perfect enigma. Only a week ago—the very day before Mr. Brown left—you said this was a perfect paradise; that New York would be very stupid."

"I have a lady's privilege to change my mind," said Ella, somewhat tartly.

And then she uttered a half-smothered exclamation; for, as the stage drew up at the door, she saw Mr. Brown leap eagerly from it, glancing up at the window as he did so.

Mrs. Clinton did not notice her sister's confusion. "Why, there is our friend," said she; and away she hurried to find Frank and go to meet him.

Ella delayed going down until the bell had sounded for the evening meal; and then she was comparatively collected, as she returned the formal greeting of the returned traveler.

"I found that my sister had already left the city for our southern home; and, as I shall be detained in New York a week later by business I cannot avoid, I ran up again to pay you a call."

Ella felt chilled and disappointed—she knew not why—so she grew silent and sad; not speaking, save when addressed, through all that long evening. She had gone out upon the piazza as it drew to a close—gone out alone, prompted by that undefined feeling of unrest that so often draws us away from the gayest scenes. She stood there, wondering why she was so unhappy; for tears came to her eyes as the pleasant laughter of the saloon floated out to her. Then she saw the subject of her thoughts step quietly through one of the long windows; and when she would have avoided him, his hand detained her while he hurriedly whispered, "Will you not grant me one request? I have a fancy that I should like to have one more walk with you before we go. I have Mrs. Clinton's permission that you should accompany me, if you choose. Will you go early, quite early to-morrow?"

Ella dared not look up, lest the secret of her heart should be unconsciously revealed. But she gave the promise, and glided away to her room.

It was very strange! What could he mean? But she had assented; and her sister reminded her of it as she called at the door to bid her good night. Little did Ella sleep. Busy conjectures and undefined anticipations, half sad, half hopeful, came by turns; and it was long after midnight before the young girl was at rest.

She sprang up wildly from a strange, incoherent dream, just as the first ray of light crept in at the window. A hasty toilet was soon completed; for she stopped not to braid her luxuriant hair, confining it but by a single comb. She looked very sweetly, however, despite the want of ornament, as she tied on a light straw hat, and stole out upon the piazza; at least so thought our hero, who already waited for her. But he did not say so, though he looked his admiration, as he thanked her for her promptness. There was no eye to see them, as they left the

house in the dim gray light; even the sunrise seekers in the astir.

I do not believe either of them knew what direction they were taking; but on they went, through lane and field, in the by-path to the falls. Neither spoke, save in monosyllables, for miles. Yes; for before they knew it, both were amazed to find they were near that place of resort.

At this early hour, the falls were not visible; for, be it known, most curious reader, that the stream once dashing wildly down the rocky amphitheatre, is now "made to turn a mill," and its tide is restrained until a sufficient number of visitors have arrived to make the exhibition profitable. Then, for the space of fifteen minutes, and for the consideration of a York shilling apiece, you may enjoy the magnificent scene. So much for the age we live in!

How heartily they laughed when they found how far they had come in that silent ramble, and at their own stupidity. That laugh seemed to destroy the reserve that had arisen between them; and when Mr. Brown proposed that, now they were there, they should descend to the bed of the stream—they would be rewarded by a bouquet of wild flowers, at least—Ellen gayly assented, in spite of the heavy dew—careless child!—and bade Mr. Brown lead the way. By this time, it was fairly day upon the hills, although a deep shadow slept in the valley below them. In vain did Mr. Brown proffer his assistance in descending; the giddy girl refused to accept it; and, half vexed at the repeated refusals, he hurried down the steep declivity. He reached the end of the path in safety, and turned to look at the light form swinging so airily above him. As he did so, he saw one little foot placed upon a stone loosely embedded in the gravelly soil; and before he could utter a cry of warning, the young girl fell. He saw a cloud of white drapery sweeping through the green foliage that obstructed the direct pathway; he already felt the shock it was impossible to avert. There was a crash of the young branches near him, and Ella was lying almost at his feet. Her face was pale as the dead, while a small crimson stream ran slowly from the temple that rested on the sharp and rugged rock, against which she had fallen.

One bound, and she was in his arms, while he dashed the clear water of a neighboring pool over that poor, pale face. Could it be death? so calmly, so rigidly she was lying upon his arm. Must she die? So young; so well-beloved! And he had killed her.

The rocks above them sent back his wild cry for help; but no other answer was returned. The hour and the place rendered aid impossible. He prayed her to speak, but to unclothe her eyes one instant; and while no sound came to break the deathlike stillness, it seemed as if hours were passing. At last there was a faint quiver of the white lips, a long, tremulous sigh, and he knew there was yet hope.

As consciousness slowly returned, Ella was conscious of a strange clasping; then, above the ring-

ing whirl that dizzied her brain, she heard a well-known voice say, "Darling! darling!" and there was almost agony in the tone. She could not remember what had happened; and she thought she was dreaming. But it was a blessed dream! And she laid perfectly still, unable to break the strange spell that bound her, and listening to that voice as once more it wildly said, "Darling!"

Then she unclosed her eyes; and as they smiled upwards, an unresisted kiss closed them again. But with returning strength, came fears and doubts; and with a strange agitation, Ella disengaged herself from the clasping arm of her companion, and said, faintly, "My sister,—Frank,—what will they say of this?"

"They know all, dear one; they have sanctioned my love long ere its acknowledgment. Tell me that you do not disdain me; say that, rude as I am—there is much more of the camp than the court about me, I confess—you will yet confide your happiness to my keeping. Tell me that you love me, Ella, even as I love you."

What think you was Ella Kirkland's reply? She laid back her head upon the heart of the speaker, and he felt no words were needed.

But the silence was broken when they began to talk of their return. How should they accomplish that steep ascent? the long walk that would then be before them? More than all, how enter the house in the sorry plight our heroine was obliged to confess to? Her lover thought she had never looked more charmingly than at present, despite the dew-stained dress to which the damp earth still clung, and the wild disorder of her loosened hair. The richly laced handkerchief bound about her bruised brow, was not an ungraceful head-dress. And how they both laughed at the awkward attempts Mr. Brown—no, Walter, for so he begged her to call him—made to assist Ella in binding up the wealth of tresses that flowed from beneath it.

But we must not linger on their return, short and pleasant as it seemed to both. Ella leaned helplessly and confidently on the arm that was henceforth to shield her from life's ills. Fortunately, all were too deeply engaged at the breakfast-table to notice their entrance; and Ella saw no one until her sister ran hastily into the room ten minutes after.

"Mercy, Ella," she exclaimed, "can I believe the evidence of my own senses? Here I am told, in the same breath, that you have been carried over the falls, broken your neck, and then came to life again the pledged wife of a Mr. Brown! *Brown*, Ella. 'Horrid name.' And such a mouth, too! He never will be able to kiss your little face—never!"

"Where is the future Mrs. Brown, of Arkansas?" chimed Frank, opening the door. "Oh! Ella, such an unaristocratic name!"

Poor Ella! It was useless to expostulate; useless to stamp her tiny foot. Frank would not cease until his wife, in pity for Ella's blushes, sent him out of the room, and then listened kindly while the young girl told her all. But even yet she could no-

speak his name without faltering in tone; and though she was obliged to acknowledge it was foolish, she felt it a slight drawback on her present happiness. With Juliet, she was ready to exclaim, "Oh, Romeo, Romeo; wherefore art thou, Romeo?" convinced that, by "any other name," she should like him quite as well.

Mrs Clinton said no word when the recital ended; but after sitting in deep thought while Ella completed her toilet, she started suddenly, exclaiming—"You have driven all things from my mind. I have some news for you. Mr. Huntington has at last actually arrived. He asked for you at once. His curiosity is nearly equal to your own. Come, shall we go down?"

One month before, and Ella's heart would have throbbed at this announcement; but so perverse is human nature, that she now listened to it with positive pain; and though she could not refuse her sister, her step had lost the lightness that had before distinguished it.

"I will come as soon as I have had some coffee," she whispered, as they reached the dining-room door; and then she turned to Mrs. Clinton's parlor in search of Frank to accompany her. Oh, joy! her lover was there leaning against the window, and seemingly absorbed in some deeply interesting reverie. Ella sprang forward with a glad cry, and ere she was aware that she had done so, stood folded to his heart. As he smoothed back the soft curls from her brow, he saw that her cheek was flushed, and felt how rapidly that little heart was beating. Was it not natural to ask the cause of this unusual excitement? Ella told him her dread of meeting Mr. Huntington; how she had escaped almost from his presence; and then she hid her face on his shoulder, and fairly cried from nervous vexation; for—would you believe it?—Walter but smiled instead of attempting to console her; and he even said, "Is this Mr. Huntington so very disagreeable to you?"

"I hope I shall never see him. I am resolved I never will. I shall hate his very name, presently, if *you* take his part."

Walter seemed to be of Frank's opinion with regard to Ella in a pout. He half stooped to kiss her red lips ere he spoke again.

"Ella," said he, at last, as though he had quite forgotten Mr. Huntington, "is my name unpleasant to you? Tell me truly."

Ella hesitated; but she could not tell an untruth; so she said, softly, "*Walter* is very beautiful."

"No, Ella; your shrinking from pronouncing my unfortunate name, tells me all I wished to know. Tell me one thing more. Would it please you to find that it had been assumed, after all—that my own was quite different? How would you like it to be Huntington, for instance?"

Ella glanced upwards, half bewildered at his words; and then a suspicion of the truth flashed upon her. She was not deceived. It was Mr. Huntington himself who detained her at his side

while she asked forgiveness, and explained Frank's little plot. At first, it was to be explained very soon; he had begged Frank to do so again and again, but Mr. Clinton was inexorable until Ella's fancies had been fully thwarted. She understood now why Frank had rushed so hastily to meet his friend the night of his unexpected arrival, and the long colloquies they had so often held.

Ella was at first heartily vexed, and would have escaped from the room; but Frank Clinton barred all egress, and she was compelled to listen to his teasing, which Mr. Huntington in vain tried to prevent. Then Agnes came, and gave glad congratulations to the tearful girl, who was at last compelled to smile at her own folly, and the success of the plot against her school-girl romance.

One more scene in Ella Kirkland's life, and thou and I, dear reader, part for a season.

Just a year from the commencement of our sketch, that young lady sat reading a letter, a very full letter, crossed and recrossed, which Walter had just brought to her. The *ci-devant* Mr. Brown had improved vastly in that period. The sunburnt flush of prairie travel had faded from his fine face, and his eyes were radiant with the light of happiness as he stood gazing on the graceful creature so soon to be his wife. But at last he grew impatient of the long epistle which seemed to interest Ellen so deeply, and he insisted on sharing its contents with her. As Ella made no strong objections to his so doing, we may conclude that we also have the right of perusal, particularly as it is from an old acquaintance, Clara Howard.

"Willingly would I comply with your request, dear Ella, but I was just on the point of claiming your promise for myself. My own bridal is fixed for the next month. I, too, have found one who loves me devotedly. 'Is he wealthy?' will be your first question, if you remember our last conversation.

"Yes," I can answer unhesitatingly. Not as the world receives the term; not in houses or lands; but, Ella, the wealth my Arthur offers for the acceptance of his bride, is far more imperishable than these—a noble, affectionate heart; a cultivated intellect; a firm purpose of right. He has taught me (not in words, for I should be pained to have him know my once boasted craving for riches), that our happiness in this life depends upon ourselves rather than our surroundings; upon intellectual culture, and a heart at peace with the world and our MAKER. In fine, that content is the only true treasure of the soul; turning, Midas-like, all that its radiance rests upon, to gold. This is our chief portion; but this we, in truth, possess. The future is fair before us, for Arthur's talents will raise him to the station he might boldly claim among earth's noblest sons. For the present, we may need to struggle with many difficulties; but our purposes are fairly wedded, and we shall aid each other.

"May God bless you, my friend, as a wife; and may you both be as happy as *we* are hoping to be."

# JANUARY BILLS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.



THE year 18— proved a very good year for Mr. Archibald Lane. His business steadily increased from the first of January, and his profits were as fair as they had ever been. Heretofore, his expenses had kept so closely side by side with his income, as to leave his mind oppressed with care, and in some doubt as to future success; but during 18—, all had been so brisk in matters of trade, and so easy in matters of money, that his mind was uniformly cheerful, and sometimes elated. He felt that, at last, he was entering the way to prosperity; a way he had so long been seeking earnestly to find.

As the year drew towards its close, Mr. Lane experienced a feeling of self-satisfaction unusual at such times. A doubt as to which would overbalance the other, his expenses or his profits, had usually made the last week of the year one of great sobriety to Mr. Lane. In 18—, it was different. As the year waned, he had none of the old feelings, for he was well satisfied that he would have several hundred dollars on the profit side of the account, above and beyond all expenses, something that had not occurred in former times.

"If I have made both ends meet, I will be satisfied," was his usual mental declaration, when he proceeded to make up his account for the year. It was different now.

"If I don't have five or six hundred dollars over,

I shall be much mistaken." This was the pleasant remark of Mr. Lane to himself, as he began the work of ascertaining the result of his year's business. All came out pretty much as he had expected. There was a balance in his favor of about six hundred dollars, after a liberal margin had been allowed for certain bad and doubtful accounts.

"Things begin to look a little brighter," said Mr. Lane, as he sat alone with his wife, on New Year's eve. The younger children were in bed, and the two oldest daughters, Kate and Emily, were out, spending the evening with a friend. This was said after taking a cigar from his mouth, and letting the smoke curl lazily about his head, which was reclining on the back of a cushioned rocking-chair.

"I'm glad to hear you say so," replied Mrs. Lane. And she spoke from her heart. New Year's eve had not always been a cheerful time.

"I've been looking over my affairs to-day," continued the husband, "and find myself better off than I was at this time last year, by at least six hundred dollars."

"That is encouraging."

"I feel it so. I trust things are to be easier in future, and that we will get a little before-hand in the world. It is time; for I will soon be in years, and less able to give active attention to business."

"I'm pleased on more than one account," said



Mrs. Lane, "to hear that you have done so well this year. I've been a good deal worried to-day about a bill that I had no idea would be half as large as it is. It was sent in this morning."

"Whose bill is that?" asked Mr. Lane, with an apparent change of feeling.

"Mr. Mercer's bill for dry goods."

"I didn't know there was a bill there."

"O yes. Don't you remember that you told me to get whatever the family wanted from him?"

"I didn't mean to run up a bill, though."

"It was so understood by me. But that makes little difference. If the money had been paid down, the cash would not be on hand now."

"How much is the bill?"

"I'm 'most afraid to say."

"How much?"

"One hundred and thirty dollars."

"Why, Anna! Bless my heart! How in the world could you run up a bill like that?"

"I've bought very little for myself," replied the rebuked wife, in a subdued and choking voice. "Nearly all has been used for you and the children."

"A hundred and thirty dollars! Oh dear! dear! dear!" ejaculated Mr. Lane, throwing his cigar into the grate, and beginning to rock himself violently. "So much of my six hundred dollars' profit scattered to the winds! I wonder how many more bills you will have coming in!"

This was downright cruel; and so Mrs. Lane felt it. She did not, however, punish him for the ungenerous remark with tears, for she was not a woman disposed on all occasions to give way to this weakness. Her reply was:—

"None that the wants of the family have not required to be made."

"But I wished you to pay cash, Anna. You know that, last January, when we were almost smothered with bills from all quarters, we made a resolution to pay cash for everything during the coming year; and I thought this had been done."

"I know very well that such a thing was talked about," replied Mrs. Lane; "and, I believe, acted upon for a time. And I also know that you yourself told me to open an account at Mercer's, in the spring, when I asked you for money to purchase summer clothing for the family."

"I didn't mean to have it go beyond that," said Mr. Lane, modifying his tone. "But what other bills are there?"

"There is a bill at Cheeseman's for groceries."

"That can't be much, for I have bought almost everything in quantities."

"No, I don't suppose it will amount to anything of consequence."

"Any other bills?"

"No; none, except the bread bill."

"I thought you paid cash for bread?"

"We never did that, Mr. Lane. The baker serves us daily, marking on his tally-stick the num-

ber of loaves; and once in three or six months sends in the bill, when it is paid."

"How long has his bill been running?"

"Six months, I believe."

"And will be forty or fifty dollars."

"Not half of it," replied Mrs. Lane.

"Well, what else is there?"

"Nothing more, I believe."

"I hope not. Here are about two hundred dollars cut off at a blow from the supposed profits of the year. Confound these bills! I wish there was no such thing as credit."

Mr. Lane was, as a matter of course, unhappy from that moment. Had these bills not existed, and the surplus of the year shown the pleasant aggregate of four hundred dollars, he would have been quite as happy as when he figured it up at six hundred. But, in imagination, he had been better off by two hundred dollars than the truth now discovered him to be, and the loss was felt as real. The remainder of the evening passed gloomily enough. When Mr. Lane retired to bed, he could not sleep for thinking of the dry goods, grocery, and bread bills. While he thus lay awake, memory assisted him to the knowledge of two or three other little matters of the same kind. There was an unsettled tailor's bill that might take twenty-five or thirty dollars to balance; and the boot-maker had something against him. Ten bushels of potatoes and three barrels of apples that he had ordered sent home in October, were yet to be paid for. At least fifty dollars more of his year's profits vanished.

At last, Mr. Lane fell asleep, and dreamed all night of bills that came almost in a shower around him. On New Year morning, he sat silent and moody at the breakfast-table, eating but little, and looking no one in the face. All were oppressed by his state of mind, though none but his wife knew its nature and the cause from which it was produced.

It was early when Mr. Lane went to his place of business, on the morning of the first of January; not so early, however, but that one or two persons had preceded him, and left behind them visible tokens of the fact. On his desk were a couple of sealed notes. He opened them with a vague presentiment of something disagreeable, and he was not disappointed. The first contained a narrow slip of paper, with a printed head, and certain written characters and figures below, which plainly enough expressed the fact that he was indebted to a certain dealer in groceries in the sum of seventy-six dollars.

"O dear!" was the mental exclamation of pain that followed the perusal of this bill. That a little piece of paper, three or four inches wide and six inches long, should have such power over the feelings of a man!

The next billet was opened with a more nervous state of mind. As he broke the seal and displaced the envelope, another narrow piece of paper, folded over from the ends in three sections, dropped upon

the desk. It was the bread bill for six months, and called for forty-four dollars and ten cents.

"Is it possible? Too bad! too bad! too bad! I had no idea of this."

Thus the unhappy man expressed his feelings. While yet holding this bill in his hand, a lad entered the store; and, coming back to the desk where he sat, politely handed him an ominous piece of paper, and retired. He opened it, and read:—

"Mr. Archibald Lane—Bought of," &c.

The particulars were, an air-tight stove, at twelve dollars; a cooking-stove, at thirty; and various other matters of Russia pipe, fire-boards, etc., in all, amounting to fifty-five dollars. Though the genial heat from the air-tight stove had comforted Mr. Lane every evening since it came home, and he had enjoyed the improved cooking of the new addition to the kitchen department, he had entirely forgotten that the bill for these increased advantages had never been settled.

"I declare!" he exclaimed, half aloud, and striking the desk as he spoke. "How came I to forget that bill? I meant to have paid it when the articles came home, and told Jenkins to send it in."

Soon after this, Mr. Lane's young man came in from the post-office. There were three letters, each with the city post-mark, and each with a bill inclosed. One, the tailor's bill, called for forty-eight dollars; another was from a hatter, and demanded five; and the third came from a jobbing carpenter, who had been called in at sundry times to mend and make, and asked for the sum of twenty-three dollars, ninety-two cents.

Mr. Lane read them over, and then placed them under a paper-weight on his desk, uttering, at the same time, a long-drawn sigh.

The morning paper was yet unread. It lay on the desk beside Mr. Lane; and, from habit more than from any desire to know its contents, he opened it and commenced reading. An occurrence of some interest had taken place in a neighboring city; and he was in the midst of a narrative of the event, and much interested in it, when he started and turned quickly at the sound of a voice near him. A man had entered, and was standing at his elbow.

"Good morning, Mr. Lane," said the man.

"Good morning, Williams," returned Mr. Lane. "Can I do anything for you to-day?" he added, in a tone of affected cheerfulness.

"Not much," said the visitor, removing his hat as he spoke, and taking therefrom a small package of papers, which he commenced turning over.

"You hav'n't a bill against me?" Mr. Lane spoke confidently.

"What do you call that?" replied the man, as he drew a slip of paper from the package in his hand, and presented it.

"One barrel of flour; five hams; a bushel of corn meal, and a sack of salt. Bless me! Didn't I pay for these at the time?"

The man smiled, and shook his head.

"Why, it's nine months since I made the pur-

chase! And I'm about to send you to send in the bill. I never like small matters of this kind to stand."

"It's been overlooked. But the money will be just as good now," was the pleasant answer.

With as good a grace as it was possible for him to assume, Mr. Lane turned to his desk, and drawing forth his pocket-book, counted out thirteen dollars; saying, as he did so,

"The next time I make a bill at your store, I wish you to send it in before the first of January."

"I won't promise," was good-humoredly replied, as the man bowed and withdrew. The pleasure was all on his side, and he could afford to be in a good humor.

"I hope that's the last," said Mr. Lane, as he wound the string of his great pocket-book around and around its distended sides, and then laid it carefully back in his desk. But he was in error. Ere the day passed, his bootmaker sent in his bill, amounting to fifteen dollars; and from a ladies' shoemaker came a like token, footed up with the sum of twenty dollars more. An upholsterer had been called upon to make a chamber carpet, and do sundry little matters about the house during the year; and he called for eight dollars and thirty-four cents. Then the jobbing cabinet-maker had his account to settle with Mr. Lane, for sundry applications of his art to broken-backed chairs, rickety tables, loose veneering, etc. etc., for all of which he wanted sixteen dollars. Thus it went on, hour after hour, until towards evening. The glazier called for two dollars and a half; the tinner presented a bill for five dollars; and the gas-fitter for eight.

By this time, human patience, at least so far as Mr. Lane was concerned, had become well-nigh exhausted. He felt like making a very severe application of his foot to any man or boy who might again invade his premises with a bill. He was sitting at his desk, in this not very amiable mood, with the bills he had received since morning spread out before him, and a slip of paper in his hand, upon which the whole of the sums they called for, amounting to four hundred and sixty-nine dollars and eighty-six cents, had been added up, when he heard the door open and shut. Turning, with a nervous start, he saw the familiar face of an old negro who had polished his boots for the last half dozen years. He knew his errand, and felt that this was like adding insult to injury. Peter came shuffling back towards the desk at which Lane remained seated with contracted brows, revealing, at each step, more and more of his polished ivory.

"Little bill, massa Lane," said the negro, producing, as he spoke, a dingy piece of paper.

This was too much. It was an ordeal beyond what overtried patience could bear.

"Clear out, you black rascal!" exclaimed the sufferer, in a passionate voice. "If you say 'bill' to me, I'll cut your ears off!"

Such an unexpected reception from "Massa Lane," who had been looked upon by Peter as one

of the most amiable men in the world, completely astounded the poor negro; and he beat a hasty retreat, glancing back every now and then to see if an inkstand or paper-weight were not advancing in the direction of his head with something like lightning speed.

To sudden storms, there always follows a deep calm. By the time Peter had vanished through the door, retiring at a velocity which could not have been greatly increased had seven devils been at his heels, Mr. Lane's mind was trembling back from its state of uncontrollable excitement. Laying his face down upon the desk, he sighed heavily. Mortification took the place of irritation, and anger against others was succeeded by anger against himself.

"Ah me!" was breathed forth heavily, at last; and raising himself up, he gathered together the bills that were spread out before him, and thrusting them in the desk, turned the key with a firm hand, making the lock click as the bolt sprang to its place.

When Mr. Lane went home that evening, his mind was calm. He had passed through a day of sad trial and disappointment; but he knew the worst, and was prepared for it. When the milk bill, milliner's and mantuamaker's bills, and sundry other little bills were laid before him, he exhibited no emotion. They were to his feelings like a gentle breeze after a violent tempest. But on one thing he was resolved; and that was, to pay cash in future for everything.

"There must be no January bills next year," said he to his family, after he had looked at the sum to pay long enough to be able to speak on the subject without visible emotion. "Let cash be paid for everything in the time to come. If the money isn't in hand when the want presents itself, let the want wait!"

This was a good resolution. But did Mr. Lane and his family abide by it? Next January will tell.



# KATE'S VALENTINE.

BY HARRY SUNDERLAND.

KATE, my sprightly niece, like most young ladies of her age, has her own opinions on matters and things currently transpiring. She thinks independently, and generally speaks what she thinks. Of course, her knowledge of human nature is not very deep; nor is she as wise in all her conclusions as she is led to imagine. I do not say this disparagingly, for Kate has quite as good sense as nine in ten who have only numbered her years, which are about twenty-one.

On one subject, Kate had, for a year or two, been particularly decided in her expressions. The Valentine epidemic, which has raged so violently, she considered a social disease emphatically. It was no healthy manifestation of right feelings, in her estimation.

As last St. Valentine's day approached, and the store windows and counters began to be filled with emblematic love missives of all kinds, from the

most costly, delicate, and refined, down to the cheapest, coarsest, and most vulgar, Kate exhibited more and more strongly her antipathy to the custom about to be honored.

"If any one were to send me a Valentine," said she, "I would take it as a direct insult to my common sense."

"Oh, as for that," I replied, sportively, "lovers are not so silly as to address the common sense of those whose favor they desire to win."

"Whoever wins me," was her prompt answer, "must appeal to that. At no other point will I be accessible."

"We shall see."

"And we will see."

"I'll wager a new hat against a spring bonnet," said I, "that you receive a Valentine this year from a certain young man named—Never mind; don't blush so; I won't name him."

"I would discard any one who insulted me with a Valentine," replied Kate, indignantly.

"Don't say that, for fear you will have cause to repent the indiscretion."

"Yes, I do say it. No man of good sense would stoop to such trifling."

"I don't know, Kate. A little trifling, now and then, is relished by the best of men."

"That's rhyme, which does not always go hand in hand with reason."

"You'll grow wiser, Kate, as you grow older."

"If that is the kind of wisdom age brings, I'm sure I don't want it."

I answered with a laugh, for to be grave on such a theme was not in me. As the fourteenth approached, Kate frequently repeated her expressions of disgust at the silly custom of sending Valentines that had become so popular, and declared, over and over again, that such a liberty with her would be taken as a direct insult, and resented accordingly.

Among the visiting acquaintances of Kate, was a young man named Loring, for whom, I could see, she had kinder feelings than for any other male friend; but, either in consequence of a natural reserve of character, or because he was in doubt as to Kate's sentiments regarding himself, he never seemed perfectly at ease in her company, though he sought it on every proper occasion. I had him in my mind when I suggested the reception of a Valentine from a certain young man, and Kate understood me perfectly.

Well, Valentine's day came round. At dinner-time, I came home as usual, and almost the first word my wife said to me was—

"What do you think? Kate's received a Valentine."

"Indeed!"

"It's true. It came by the Dispatch Post. I received it at the door, and sent it up to her room."

"Have you seen her since?"

"No."

"Of course, she's particularly indignant."

"I don't know anything about that. It was a handsome one, I infer, from the size and envelop; and had in it something hard, which I took for jewelry—a breastpin or a bracelet."

"Where do you think it came from?" said I.

"I've guessed young Loring," answered my wife.

"If he has sent it, he has committed a great mistake," I replied.

"How so?"

"You know Kate's antipathy to Valentines."

"Young ladies often talk a great deal without really knowing what they say; and Kate is not altogether free from the fault," said my wife.

I readily enough assented to this. When the bell rung for dinner, Kate came down from her room. Her face was rather more sober than usual, and she did not join in the conversation with her accustomed animation. She was first to retire from the table.

"I don't think she is mortally offended," said I to my wife.

"No, not if I am skilled in mental indications," was replied.

During the afternoon, two or three more love missives came; but not a word touching their reception, or the feelings produced thereby, was breathed by Kate. It was plain, however, to one with even half an eye, that she was pleased at the mark of attention, or, it might be, token of love. Evening, instead of being passed as usual with the family, was spent by Kate in her room.

On the next morning, at the breakfast-table, I mentioned the fact that a certain number of Valentines had passed through the post-office on the day before. This was in order to introduce the subject, and call out some remark from Kate; but she remained silent on the subject, though not without indicating, by her heightened color and restless eye, that her thoughts were busy enough.

"I rather think our young lady has changed her opinions," said I, smiling, after Kate had left the table.

"Circumstances alter cases, you know," replied my wife, smiling in turn.

On the next evening, young Loring called in. Kate was longer than usual in making her appearance, and when she came into the parlor, was dressed with more than ordinary care. For the first time, I noticed on her wrist a new and beautiful bracelet. She blushed, slightly, as she met Loring; seemed a little embarrassed, but was soon conversing with him in an animated style.

"Did you see that new bracelet?" asked my wife, when we were next alone.

"I did."

"Where did it come from?"

"Didn't you say that in one of the Valentines she received there was something hard, like a piece of jewelry?"

"Yes."

"That bracelet, probably."

"No doubt of it."

"And, moreover," said I, "it is plain that she believes the Valentine came from Loring; for, at her first meeting with him, she wears it for the first time."

"Thus," remarked my wife, "notifying him that she receives the token kindly."

I laughed aloud, for I could not help it.

"Why do you laugh?" asked my wife.

"She was going to discard any one who insulted her with a Valentine!"

"That was idle talk. I've heard such things said before."

Two or three evenings went by, and Loring came again. Since his former visit, the new bracelet had not been seen. Now it was worn again. As we knew the young man well, and liked him the better the more intimately we knew him, we saw no impropriety in leaving the young couple alone in the parlor.

From that time, there was a marked change in my niece. She was less sprightly and more absent-

minded than usual. Next, her appetite failed her, and she began to grow thin and lose her color—sure signs of a heart disease. Meanwhile, Loring was a constant visitor; and whenever he came, the bracelet was displayed, evidently in token that she knew from whence it came, and wished its full acceptance to be understood. At last, I received a formal visit from the young man, and a formal offer for the hand of Kate. Of course, I had no objections to urge. That matter was, in my mind, already fully settled.

After that, the bracelet aforementioned was always to be seen on the arm of Kate. One evening, it was about a month before her wedding-day, as I sat talking with Kate, for whom my affection had always been as tender as that of a father for his child, I took her hand, and said, as I examined the bracelet—

“That is very beautiful.”

“Yes, I have always admired it very much,” she replied, the color growing warmer in her cheeks.

“A love-token, I presume?”

And as I said this, I looked at her archly. The hue of her cheeks became still deeper.

“A Valentino?” I added.

The blood mounted to her temples.

“But it was not an ordinary Valentino. It did not come from a trifle, and was not received as an insult. I thought you were not the girl, Kate, to reject a sincere offer.”

Kate blushed still more deeply.

“This little love-token, dear Kate, is for thee:

Accept it, and keep it, and wear it for me.”

As I repeated this couplet, the young girl started

with surprise, and looked with inquiring earnestness in my face.

“But I’m afraid, Kate,” said I, with a meaning smile, and a voice half-regretful in its tone, “that you wore it less for the real than for an imaginary giver.”

She did not reply, but looked at me more earnestly, while a sudden light appeared to break upon her mind.

“Dear uncle,” said she, at length, bending towards me, “had you seen this bracelet before you saw it on my arm?”

“Yes, love,” was my tenderly spoken reply; and I pressed her pure forehead with my lips as I spoke.

“And you sent it?”

She seemed half breathless as she awaited my reply.

“Yes, dear.”

She covered her face suddenly with her hands, and sat motionless for some moments. In a little while, I saw a tear come stealing through her fingers. My feelings were touched, for I feared lest I had done violence to hers by this little confession of the truth. But, ere I had looked for composure of mind, she withdrew her hands from her face, on which an affectionate smile shone like a rainbow amid the parting drops of a summer shower, and said, as she arose—

“Henceforth, I will wear it for the real giver.”

Bending to kiss me, she left a tear on my cheek, and then glided from the room.

On her wedding night, Kate wore her Valentino bracelet; and I am weak enough to believe—if the sentiment may be called a weakness—that she prized it even more highly than if Loring himself had been the giver.

## KATHARINE WALTON: OR. THE REBEL'S DAUGHTER.

### A TALE OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY W. GILMORE SIMMS, ESQ., AUTHOR OF "THE PARTISAN," "MELLICHAMPE," "THE KINSMEN,"  
"THE YEMASSEE," ETC.

[Entered, according to the act of Congress, in the year 1847, by W. Gilmore Simms, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

#### CHAPTER I.

You, besides

This fort, have yet three castles in this isle,  
Amplly provided for, and eight tall ships  
Riding at anchor near.—*DRYDEN, Amboyna.*

Our story opens early in September, in the eventful year of American revolutionary history, one thousand seven hundred and eighty. Our scene is one destined to afford abundant materials for the purposes of the future romancer. It lies chiefly upon the banks of the Ashley, in South Carolina—a region which, at this period, was almost entirely covered by the arms of the foreign enemy. In previous narratives, as well as in the histories, will be found the details of his gradual conquests; and no one need be told of the events following the fall of Charleston, and terminating in the defeat of General Gates, at Camden, by which, for a season, the hopes of patriotism, as well as the efforts of valor which aimed at the recovery of the country from hostile domination, were humbled, if not wholly overthrown. The southern liberating army was temporarily dispersed, rallying slowly to their standards in the wildernesses of North Carolina; few in number, miserably clad, and almost totally wanting in the means and appliances of war. The victory of the British over Gates was considered complete. It was distinguished by their usual sacrifices. Many of their prisoners were executed upon the spot, mostly upon the smallest prettexts and the most questionable testimony. These sacrifices were due somewhat to the requisitions of the loyalists, to the excited passions of the conquerors, and, in some degree, to their own scorn of the victims. But one of those decreed for sacrifice had made his escape, rescued, in the moment of destined execution, by a most daring and unexpected onslaught of a small body of partisans, led by a favorite leader. Colonel Richard Walton, a gentleman of great personal worth, of considerable wealth, and exercising much social influence, had, under particular circumstances, and when the State was believed to be utterly lost to the confederacy, taken what was entitled a "British protection." This was a parole, insuring him safety and shelter beneath the protection of the conqueror, so long as he preserved his neutrality. It was some reproach to Colonel Walton that he had taken this protection;

but, in the particular circumstances of the case, there was much to extenuate his offence. With his justification, however, just at this moment, we have nothing to do. It is enough that the violation of the compact between the citizen and the conqueror was due to the British commander. In the emergency of invasion, at the approach of the continental arms, the securities of those who had taken protection were withdrawn, by proclamation, unless they presented themselves in the British ranks and took up arms under the banner of the invader. Compelled to draw the sword, Colonel Walton did so on the side of the country. He fell into the hands of Cornwallis at the fatal battle of Camden; and, steadily refusing the overtures of the British general to purge himself of the alleged treason by taking a commission in the service of the conqueror, he was ordered to execution at Dorchester, in the neighborhood of his estates, and as an example of terror to the surrounding country. He was rescued, at the foot of the gallows, from the degrading death which had been decreed him. By a well-planned and desperate enterprise, led by Major Singleton, a kinsman, he was plucked from the clutches of the executioner; and the successful effort was still farther distinguished by the almost total annihilation of the strong guard of the British, which had left the garrison at Dorchester to escort the victim to the fatal tree. The beautiful hamlet of Dorchester was partially laid in ashes during the short but sanguinary conflict; and, before reinforcements could arrive from the fortified post at the place, the partisans had melted away, like so many shadows, into the swamps of the neighboring cypress, carrying with them, in safety, their enfranchised captive. The occurrence had been one rather to exasperate the invader than to disturb his securities. It was not less an indignity than a hurt; and, taking place, as it did, within twenty miles of the garrison of Charleston, it denoted a degree of audacity, on the part of the rebels, which particularly called for the active vengeance of the invader, as an insult and a disgrace to his arms.

But if the mortification of Colonel Proctor, by whom the post at Dorchester was held, was great, still greater was the fury of Colonel Balfour, the commandant of Charleston. The intelligence reached him, by express, at midnight of the day of the affair,

and roused him from the grateful slumbers of a life which had hitherto been fortunate in the acquisition of every desired indulgence, and from dreams holding forth the most delicious promise of that *otium cum dignitate* which was in the contemplation of all his toils. To be aroused to such intelligence as had been brought him, was to deny him both leisure and respect—nay, to involve him in possible forfeiture of the possession of place and power, which, he well knew, were of doubtful tenure only, and easily determinable by a run of such disasters as that which he was now required to contemplate. Yet Balfour, in reality, had nothing with which to reproach himself in the affair at Dorchester. No blame, whether of omission or performance, could be charged upon him, making him liable to reproach for this misfortune. He had no reason to suppose that, with Rawdon in command at Camden, and Cornwallis, but recently the victor over Gates, with the great body of the British army covering every conspicuous point in the country, that any small party of rebels should prove so daring as to dart between and snatch the prey from the very grasp of the executioner. Marion had, however, done this upon the Santee, and here now was his lieutenant repeating the audacious enterprise upon the Ashley. Though really not to blame, Balfour yet very well knew how severe were the judgments which, in Great Britain, were usually visited upon the misfortunes or failures of British captains in America. He had no reason to doubt that, in his case, as commonly in that of others, his superiors would be apt to cast upon the subordinate the responsibilities of every mischance. It is true that he might offer good defence. He could show that, in order to strengthen his army against Gates, Cornwallis had stripped the city of nearly all its disposable force, leaving him nothing but invalids, and a command of cavalry not much more than sufficient to scour the neighborhood, bring in supplies, and furnish escorts. Dorchester had been shorn of its garrison for the same reason by the same officer. The reproach, if any, lay at the door of Cornwallis. Yet who would impute blame to the successful general, who offers his plea while yet his trumpets are sounding in every ear with the triumphal notes of a great victory? Success is an argument that effectually stops the mouth of censure. To fasten the reproach upon another, by whom no plea of good fortune could be offered, was the policy of Balfour; and his eye was already turned upon the victim. But this, hereafter. For the present, his task was to repair, if possible, the misfortune; to recover the freed rebel; to put Dorchester in a better state to overawe the surrounding country, and make himself sure in his position by timely reports of the affair to his superiors; by which, showing them where the fault might be imputable to themselves, while studiously imputing it to another, he should induce them to such an adoption of his views as should silence all representations which might be hurtful to his own security.

All these meditations passed rapidly through the

brain of Balfour, as he made his midnight toilet When he came forth, his plans were all complete. As we are destined to see much more of this personage in the progress of our narrative, it will not be unwise, in this place, to dwell somewhat more particularly upon the mental and moral nature of the man. At the period of which we write, he was in the vigor of his years. He had *kept* well, to borrow the idiom of another people, and was altogether a very fine specimen of physical manhood. With an erect person, fully six feet in height, broad-chested, and athletic; with cheeks unwrinkled, a skin clear and florid; eyes large, blue, and tolerably expressive; and features generally well-chiseled, he was altogether a person to impose at a glance, and almost persuade, without farther examination, to the conviction of generous impulses, if not a commanding intellect, as the natural concomitants of so much that is prepossessing in the exterior. But Balfour was a man neither of mind nor heart. In ordinary affairs, he was sufficiently shrewd and searching. It was not easy, certainly, to delude him, where his selfish interests were at all at issue. In the mere details of business, he was methodical and usually correct; but he neither led nor planned an enterprise; and, while able in civil matters to carry out the designs of others, it is not seen that he ever counseled or conceived an improvement. His passions were more active than his mind, yet they never impelled him to courageous performance. He was a carpet knight, making a famous figure always on parade, and, in the splendid uniform of his regiment, really a magnificent person—in the language of a lady who knew him well, “as splendid as scarlet, gold lace, and feathers could make a man.” But he never distinguished himself in action. Indeed, the record is wanting which would show that he had ever been in action. That he should have risen to his high station, as second in command of the British army in South Carolina—for such was his rank—might reasonably provoke our surprise, but that the record which fails to tell us of his achievements in battle, is somewhat more copious in other matters. His method of rising into power was among the reproaches urged against him. His obsequious devotedness to the humors and pleasures—we may safely say vices—of Sir William Howe, first gained him position, and led finally to his present appointment. In the capacity of commandant at Charleston, his arrogance became insufferable. His vanity seems to have been in due degree with the servility which he had been forced to show in the acquisition of his objects. He could enact the opposite phases in the character of his countryman, Sir Pertinax MacSycophant, without an effort at transition—*bow* without shame or sense of degradation, and command without decency or sense of self-respect. In council, he was at once ignorant and self-opinionated. In the exercise of his government, he absorbed all the powers of the state. “By the subversion,” says Ramsay, “of every trace of the popular government, without any proper civil estab-



lishment in its place, he, with a few coadjutors, assumed and exercised legislative, judicial, and executive powers over citizens in the same manner as over the common soldiery." He was prompt to anger, obdurate in punishment, frivolous in his exactions, and bloated with the false consequences of a position which he had reached through meanness and exercised without dignity. Feared and hated by his inferiors, despised by his equals, and loved by few, if any, he was yet one of that fortunate class of persons whom an inordinate but accommodating self-esteem happily assures and satisfies in every situation. Gratifying his favorite passions at every step in his progress, he probably found no reason to regret the loss of affections that he had never learned to value and never cared to win. Utterly selfish, his mind had nevertheless never risen to the appreciation of those better treasures of life and of the heart which the noble nature learns to prize beyond all others, as by a natural instinct. His sympathies were those only of the sensual temperament. His desires were those of the voluptuary. He was an unmarried man, and his habits were those of any other gay Lothario of the army. The warm tints upon his cheek were significant of something more than vulgar health; and the liquid softness of his eye was indicative of habits such as were admitted not to be among the worst traits of that passionate Roman whose world was lost probably quite as much by wine as love. Balfour was not the person to forfeit *his* world through either of these passions, though he too freely and frequently indulged in both. He possessed yet others which Mark Antony does not seem to have shared, or not in large degree; and his avarice and lust of power were the rods, like those of Aaron, which kept all others in subjection. But we have lingered sufficiently long upon his portrait. Enough has been said and shown to furnish all the clues to his character. Let us now see to his performances

In a short period after receiving his advices from Dorchester, Balfour was prepared for business. His secretary was soon in attendance, and his aids were dispatched in various quarters in search of the officers whom he had summoned to his morning conference. He occupied, as "Head Quarters," that noble old mansion, still remaining in the lower part of King Street, Charleston, known as number eleven. At that period, it belonged to the estate of Miles Brewton. Subsequently, it became the property of Colonel William Allston, in whose family it still remains. But with Balfour as its tenant, the proprietorship might fairly be assumed to be wholly in himself; determinable only in the event, now scarcely anticipated by the invader, of the State ever being recovered by the arms of the Americans. With his secretary seated at the table, his pen rapidly coursing over the sheets under the dictation of his superior, Balfour trod the apartment—the southeast chamber in the second story—in evident impatience. At times, he hurried to the front windows, which

were all open, and looked forth, as any unusual sounds assailed his ears. Returning, he uttered sentence after sentence of instruction, and paused only to approach the sideboard and renew his draught of old Madeira, a bottle of which had been freshly opened before the secretary came. At length, to the relief of his impatience, the sound of a carriage was heard rolling to the door, and the soldier in attendance looked in to announce

"Colonel Cruden."

"Show him in," was the reply; and, the next moment, the person thus named made his appearance, and was welcomed in proper terms by the commandant, who, turning to the secretary, hastily examined what he had written, as hastily attached his seal and signature, and, in lower tones than was his wont, gave him instructions in what manner to dispose of the papers.

"Leave us now," said Balfour, "but be not far; I may need you shortly. No more sleep to-night; remember that. You may help yourself to some of the wine; it may assist you in sustaining your vigil."

The young man did not scruple to employ the privilege awarded him. He drank the wine, and, with a bow, retired.

"Let us drink, also, Cruden," was the speech of Balfour, the moment the youth had gone. "This early rising renders some stimulus necessary, particularly when the matter is as annoying as troublesome. Come, this Madeira is from the cellar of old Laurens, some time President of Congress. He had a better taste for Madeira than politics. There is no better to be found in all the city. Come."

"But what is this business which calls us up at this unseasonable hour?"

"Something in your way, I fancy. But first let me congratulate you on your appointment. As agent for sequestrated estates, you should soon be a millionaire."

"There certainly ought to be good pickings where rebellion has been so fruitful," said the other.

"Surely; and in possession of the fine mansion of that premature rebel, Colesworth Pinckney—decidedly the finest house in Carolina—you are already in the enjoyment of a pleasant foretaste of what must follow. The house, of course, will remain your own."

"I suppose so, if the State is not reconquered."

"And have you any fears of this, after the defeat of that sentimental hero, Gates, at Camden? That affair seems to settle the question. These people are effectually crushed and cowed, and Congress can never raise another army. The militia of the Middle States and the South are by no means numerous, and they want everything as well as arms. The New Englanders no longer take the field, now that the war has left their own borders; and, come what may, it is very clear that the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida must still remain the colonies of Great Britain. In that event, a peace which even yields independence to the more northern provinces,

will give nothing to those; and my faith in the *ut possidetis* principle makes me quite easy with regard to my possessions."

And he looked round upon the pleasant apartment which he occupied with the air of a man perfectly satisfied with the architectural proportions of his building.

"I am glad to hear you in this pleasant vein. From your impatient summons, I had thought the devil was to pay."

"And so he is," said the commandant, suddenly becoming grave; "the devil to pay, indeed; and I am sorry to tell you that your kinsman, Proctor, is in danger of sharp censure, if not a loss of his commission."

"Ha!"

"He has nearly suffered the surprise of his post; suffered this malignant Walton to be snatched from his clutches on the way to execution, half of his men to be cut to pieces, and Dorchester burnt to ashes."

"You confound me!"

"It is too true. There is his own dispatch, which, of course, makes the best of it."

He pointed to the table where lay a couple of letters with the seals both broken; and Cruden was about to place his hand on one of them, when his grasp was prevented, rather precipitately, by that of Balfour.

"Stay; that is not the dispatch. Here it is," giving the one letter, and carefully thrusting the other into his pocket. But Cruden had already seen the superscription, which bore the Dorchester stamp also. He made no comment, however, on the circumstance, and forbore all inquiry, while he proceeded to read the dispatch of Colonel Proctor, to whom the post at Dorchester and the contiguous country had been confided.

"This is certainly a most unfortunate affair; but I do not see how Proctor is to blame. He seems to have done everything in his power."

"That is to be seen. I hope so, for your sake no less than his. But it is a matter of too serious a kind not to demand keen and searching inquiry."

"Proctor had no more than seventy men at the post. Cornwallis stripped him of all that could be spared; and more, it seems, than it was safe to spare."

"My dear friend, you are just in the receipt of a handsome appointment from Cornwallis. How can you suppose that he should err in a military calculation of this sort? How suppose that the King of Great Britain can be persuaded of *his* error at the very moment which brings him advices of so great a victory? It is impossible! Come, let us replenish;" and he again filled the glasses. Cruden drank, but deliberately; and while the goblet was yet unfinished, paused to say—

"I see, Balfour, my kinsman is to be sacrificed."

"Nay, not so; we shall give him every opportunity of saving himself. On my honor, he shall not be pressed to the wall. But you see for yourself

that the affair is an unlucky one—a most unlucky one—just at this juncture."

"And Proctor such a good fellow—really a noble fellow."

"Admitted; and yet, between us, Cruden, he has been particularly unfortunate, I fear, in allowing his affections to be ensnared by the daughter of this very rebel, Walton; who is not without attractions, considering her vast estates. She is more than good-looking, I hear—indeed, Kitty Harvey tells me that she was quite a beauty a year ago. Moll is not willing to go so far, but says she was very good-looking. Now, these charms, in addition to some two or three hundred slaves, and a most baronial landed estate, have proved too much for your nephew; and the fear is that he has shown himself quite too indulgent—indeed, a little wilfully careless and remiss; and to this remissness the rebel owes his escape."

"This is a very shocking suspicion, Balfour; and not to be reported or repented without the best of testimony. John Proctor is one of the most honorable men living. There does not seem to have been any remissness. Those partisans of Singleton were surely unexpected; and when Proctor sends out half of his disposable force to escort the rebel to execution, one would think he had furnished quite as large a guard as was requisite."

"So, under ordinary circumstances, it would seem; and yet where would this party of rebels, though led by a notoriously daring fellow, find the audacity to attack such a guard within sight of the fortress, in midday, unless secretly conscious that the chances favored him in an extraordinary manner? Mind you, now, I say nothing of my own head. I give you only the conjectures, the mere whisperings of others, and beg you to believe that I keep my judgment in reserve for more conclusive evidence."

"I don't doubt that Proctor will acquit himself before any court. But have you any further advices—no letters?"

"None that relate to this affair," was the rather hesitating reply.

"And what is it, Balfour, for which you want me now?"

"As east of your office, *mon ami*, I wish to afford you an opportunity of exercising yourself in your new vocation. You must accompany me to Dorchester this very day. Here is a memorandum of particulars. Take your secretary with you. The estates of this rebel Walton are to be requested. You shall take them in charge and administer them. Lands, negroes, house, furniture, man-servant and maid-servant, ox and ass, and such an equipage as you will scarcely find anywhere in the colonies. I am told that the Mudoira in Walton's garrets is the oldest in the country. Remember, there must be a fair division of *that* spoil. I have not insisted upon your merits to Cornwallis to be denied my reward. Besides, the stud of this rebel is said to be a magnificent one. I know that Tarleton itched to find a plea for laying hands upon his blooded horses. We

must share them also, Cruden. I am by no means satisfied with my stock, and must recruit and supply myself. There are two or three hundred negroes, an immense stock of plate, and a crop of rice just about to be harvested. You will be secure of most of this treasure, anyhow, even should you find an heir for it in your nephew."

This last sentence was said with a smile, which Cruden did not greatly relish. There was much in what Balfour had spoken to disquiet him as well as give him pleasure. Cruden, like the greater number of his fellow-soldiers, was anxious to spoil the Egyptians. His avarice was almost as blind and devouring as that of Balfour, and his love of show not less; but he had affections and sympathies, such as are grateful to humanity. He was proud of his nephew, whose generous and brave qualities had done honor to their connection; and he was not willing to see him sacrificed without an effort. This he clearly perceived was Balfour's present object. Why, he did not care to know. It was enough that he resolved to do what was in his power to defeat his purpose.

We need not follow the farther conference of these good companions. It was of a kind to interest themselves only. With the first glimpses of the gray dawning, Cruden took his departure to hasten his preparations for the contemplated journey; while Balfour, having given all his orders, threw himself upon the sofa, and soon slept as soundly as if he had only just retired for the night.

## CHAPTER II.

Your confidence, I'm sure, is now of proof;  
The prospect from the garden must have shown you  
Enough for deep suspicion.

MIDDLETON, *The Changeling*.

THE blast of trumpets beneath his windows, announcing the readiness of his cavalry to march, found Balfour at the conclusion of a late breakfast. He was soon in the saddle, and accompanied by his friend Cruden, followed by some inferior officers. This party rode on slowly, while the major in command of the brigade proceeded on the march, drawing up only as they reached the great gate of the city. The stranger who, at this day, shall find himself gazing upon the southern front of the stately pile called the "Citadel," in Charleston—a building of the State, devoted to the purposes of military education—will stand at no great distance from what was then the main entrance to the city. Along this line ran the fortifications, extending from the river Cooper to the Ashley, and traversing very nearly what is now the boundary line between the corporate limits of Charleston and its very extensive suburb. At that early period, the fortifications of the place were at some distance from the settlement. The surface occupied by the city scarcely reached beyond a fourth of the present dimensions, and, in the north and west, was distinguished only by some scattered

and inferior habitations. "Up the path" was the phrase used by which to distinguish the region which had been assigned to the defences and beyond. Without, the region lay partially in woods, broken only by an occasional farmstead and worn fence, which, when the British took possession of the "Neck" for the purposes of the league, soon disappeared, either wholly or in part, beneath the fire and the axo. The gate of the city stood a little to the east of King Street—not quite midway, perhaps, between that and Meeting Street. It was covered within by a strong *horn-work* of masonry, originally built by the besieged, and afterwards improved by the enemy. It was a work of considerable strength in that day, fraised, picketed, and intended as a citadel. The British, after the fall of the city, greatly strengthened and increased these fortifications; though, even in their hands, the lines remained what are called field-works only. Beyond them, at the moment when we request the reader's attention, were still perceptible the traces of the several footholds, taken by the enemy when the league was in progress. You could see the *debris* of the redoubts, under the cover of which they had made their approaches; the several parallels—though thrown down in part, and the earth removed, with the view to strengthening the fortifications—still showing themselves upon the surface, and occasionally arresting the eye by an unbroken redoubt, or the mound which told where the mortar-battery had been erected. Farms and fences had been destroyed; trees had been cut down for pickets and abatis; and even that noble avenue, leading from the city, called the "Broadway," which old Archdale tells us was "so delightful a road and walk of a great breadth, so pleasantly green, that I believe no prince in Europe, by all their art, can make so pleasant a sight for the whole year," even this had been shorn of many of its noblest patriarchs, of oak and cedar, for the commonest purposes of fuel or defence. It was still an avenue, however, to compel the admiration of the European. All was not lost of its ample foliage, its green umbrage, its tall pines, fresh and verdant cedars, and ancient gnarled oaks; and, as the splendidly uniformed cavalry of the British, two hundred in number, filed away beneath its pleasant thickets, the spectacle was one of a beauty most unique, and might well persuade the spectator into a partial forgetfulness of the fearful trade which these gallant troopers carried on. On each hand, from this nearly central point, might glimpses be had of the two rivers, scarce a mile asunder; beneath which, on the most gradual slope of plane, the city of Charleston rises, the Ashley on the west, the Cooper on the east, both navigable for a small distance—streams of ample breadth, if not of depth; and, in fact, rather arms of the sea than arteries of the land.

The British detachment, about to leave the garrison, its objects not known, nor its destination, was necessarily a subject of considerable interest to all parties. Whig and loyalist equally regarded its

movements with curiosity and excitement. The recent defeat of the Americans at Camden; the sudden and startling event, so near at hand, in the rescue at Dorchester, and the partial conflagration of that hamlet, were all now known among the citizens. The question with the one party was that of the dethroned sovereign of England on the ominous appearance of Gloster, "What bloody scene hath Roscius now to act?"—while the other looked forward to new progresses, ending in the acquisition of fresh spoils from new confiscations, and the punishment of enemies whom they had learned to hate in due degree with the appreciation of their virtuous patriotism, which persevered, under all privations, in a manly resistance to the invader. Groups of these, of both parties, separated naturally by their mutual antipathies, had assembled in the open space contiguous to the citadel, and were now anxiously contemplating the spectacle. Among these, scattered at plays that had an earnest signification, were dozens of sturdy urchins, already divided into parties according to the influence of their parental and other associations. These, known as the "Bay Boys" and the "Green Boys," were playing at soldiers, well armed with cornstalks, and hammering away at each other, in charging and retreating squadrons. The "Bay Boys" were all loyalists, the "Green Boys" the Whigs, or patriots; and, in their respective designations, we have no inadequate suggestion of the influences which operated to divide the factions of their elders in the city. The "Bay Boys" represented the commercial influence, which, being chiefly in the hands of foreigners, acknowledged a more natural sympathy with Britain than the "Green Boys," or those of the suburban population, most of whom were the agricultural aristocracy of the low country, and with whom the revolutionary movement in Carolina had its origin.

The appearance of Balfour and his suite dispersed these parties, who retired upon opposite sides, leaving a free passage for the horses, which were driven forward with but small regard for the safety of the crowds that covered the highway. The men turned away with as much promptitude as the boys; neither Whig nor loyalist having much assurance of consideration from a ruler so arrogant and capricious as Balfour, and so reckless of the comfort of inferiors. A few women might be seen, as if in waiting, mostly in gig or chair—then the most commonly used vehicle—though one or more might be seen in carriages, and a few on horseback, followed by negro servants. These were all prepared to leave the city, on brief visits, as was customary, to the neighboring farms and plantations along one or other of the two rivers. They were destined to disappointment, Balfour sternly denying the usual permit to depart from the city, at a moment when there was reason to suppose that stray bodies of Marion's parties were lurking in the neighborhood. The precaution was a proper one; but there was no grace or delicacy in the manner of Balfour's denial.

"Get home, madam," was the rude reply to one lady, who addressed him from the window of her carriage; "and be grateful for the security which the arms of his majesty afford you within the walls of the city. We will see after your estates."

"My concern is, sir, that you will prove yourself only too provident," answered the high-spirited woman, as she bade her coachman wheel about to return.

"There is no breaking down the spirit of this people," muttered Balfour to Cruden, as they rode forward. "That woman always gives me the last word, and it is never an unspiced one."

"They who lose the soup may well be permitted to enjoy the pepper," said Cruden. "It ruffles you, which it should not."

"They shall bend or break before I am done with them," answered the other. To the major commanding in his absence, he gave strict injunctions that no one should be allowed to leave the city under any pretence.

"Unless General Williamson, I suppose?" was the inquiry, in return.

"Has he desired to go forth to-day?"

"To-morrow, sir."

"Well, let him be an exception;" and he rode off; "though"—continuing, as if speaking to himself—"were he wise, he should hug the city walls as his only security. His neck would run a sorry chance were he to fall into the hands of his ancient comrades."

"I do not see that his desertion of the enemy has done us much service," was the remark of Cruden.

"You mistake: his correspondence has been most efficient. He has brought over numbers in Ninety-Six and along the Congaree. But these are matters that we cannot publish."

At the "Quarter's House," between five and six miles, the party came to a halt. This was a famous place in that day for parties from the city. The long, low building, still occupying the spot, might be almost esteemed a *fac-simile* of the one which covered it then. It received its name, as it was the officers' quarters for the old field range contiguous, which is still known as "Izard's Camp." It was now a region devoted to festivity rather than war. Hither the British officers, of an afternoon, drove out their favorite damsels. Here they gamed and drank with their comrades; and occasionally a grand hop shook the rude log foundations of the fabric, while the rafters glenned with the blaze of cressets, flaming up from open oil vessels of tin. Though not yet midday, Balfour halted here to procure refreshments; and Mother Graddock, by whom the place was kept, was required to use her best skill—which was far from mean in this department of art—in compounding for her sensual customer a royal noggin of milk punch; old Jamaica rum being the potent element which the milk was vainly expected to subdue. A lounge of half an hour in the ample piazza, and the party resumed their route, following

after the march of the brigade at a smart canter. A ride of four hours brought them to Dorchester, where, apprised of their approach, the garrison was drawn out to receive them.

The spectacle that met the eyes of Balfour, in the smoking ruins of the village, was well calculated to impress him with a serious sense of the necessity of a thorough investigation into the affair. He shook his head with great gravity as he said to Cruden—

"It will be well if your kinsman can acquit himself of the responsibility of this affair. Proctor is a good officer; is quick, sensible, and brave; but I fear, Cruden, I very much fear, that he has been somewhat remiss in this business. And then the awkward relations which are said to have existed between this rebel's daughter and himself—"

"Stay," said Cruden; "he approaches."

The next moment, Major Proctor joined the party, and offered the proper welcome. He was a young man, not more than twenty-eight or thirty in appearance; and more than ordinarily youthful to have arrived at the rank which he held in the service. But he had been fortunate in his opportunities for distinction; and, both in the conquest of New York and of Charleston, had won the special applauses of his superiors for equal bravery and intelligence. His person was cast in a very noble mould. He was tall, erect, and graceful, with a countenance finely expressive; lofty brow, large and animated eyes; and features which, but for a stern compression of the lips, might have appeared effeminately handsome. At this time, his face was marked by an appropriate gravity. He conducted his visitors through the village, pointing out the scene of every important transaction with dignity and calmness. But his words were as few as possible; and every reference to the subject, naturally so painful, was influenced chiefly by considerations of duty to his superior.

When this examination of the field was ended, they made their way towards the fortress, at the entrance of which they found an officer in waiting, to whom Balfour spoke rather eagerly, and in accents much less stately than those which he employed in dealing with subordinates. Captain Vaughan—for such was the name and title of this officer—met the eye of Proctor at this moment, and did not fail to observe the dark scowl which overshadowed it. A sudden gleam of intelligence, which did not seem without its triumph, lighted up his own eyes as he beheld it; and his lip curled with a smile barely perceptible to a single one of the party. Balfour just then called the young officer forward, and they passed through the portals of the fortress together. Proctor motioned his kinsman, Cruden, forward also; but the latter, twitching him by the sleeve, held him back as he eagerly asked the question, in a whisper—

"For God's sake, John, what is all this? How are you to blame?"

"Only for having an enemy, uncle, I suppose."

"An enemy? I thought so. But who?"

Proctor simply waved his hand forward in the direction of Vaughan, whose retiring form was still to be seen following close behind Balfour.

"You will soon see."

"Vaughan! But how can he hurt you? Why should he be your enemy?"

"I am in his way somewhat; and—but not now, uncle. Let us go forward."

They were soon all assembled in Proctor's quarters, where dinner was in progress. Balfour had already renewed his draughts, enjoying, with a relish, the old Jamaica, of which a portly square bottle stood before him. His beverage now was taken without the milk; but was qualified with a rather small allowance of cool water. The conversation was only casual. It was tacitly understood that, for the present, the subject most in the mind of all parties was to be left for future discussion. Proctor did the honors with ease and grace, yet with a gravity of aspect that lacked little of severity. Captains Vaughan and Dickson were of the company—officers both belonging to the station—and Cruden contrived to examine, at intervals, the features of the former, of whom he knew but little, with the scrutiny of one who had an interest in fathoming the character of him he surveyed. But Vaughan's face was one of those inscrutable ones—a dark fountain, which shows its surface only, and nothing of its depths. He was not unaware of Cruden's watch—that circumspect old soldier, with all his shrewdness and experience, being no sort of match for the person, seemingly a mere boy, small of features, slight of figure, and with a chin that appeared quite too smooth to demand the reaping of a razor—whom he sought to fathom. Yet those girlish features, that pale face, and thin, effeminate, and closed lips, were the unrevealing representations of an intense ambition, coupled with a cool, deliberate, almost icy temper, which seldom betrayed impatience, and never any of its secrets. His eyes smiled only, not his lips, as he noted the furtive scrutiny which Cruden maintained.

At length, dinner was announced, and discussed. Balfour was at home at table. He was a person to do the honors for the *bon vivant*; and here, perhaps, lay some of the secret of his influence with Sir William Howe. Fish from the Ashley, which glided beneath the walls of the fortress, and venison from the forests which spread away on every hand within bowshot, formed the chief dishes of the feast; and the Jamaica proved an excellent appetizer and provocative. Wines were not wanting; and the commandant of Charleston very soon showed symptoms which acknowledged their influence. Before the cloth had been removed, his forbearance was forgotten; and, rather abruptly, the affair of Walton's rescue was brought upon the table.

"I'll tell you what, Proctor, this affair is decidedly unfortunate. Here you have seventy-six men in

garrison, good men, not including invalids, and you send out a detachment of thirty only to escort this rebel Walton to the gallows. I must say, you might almost have expected what followed."

"Really, Colonel Balfour, I see not that. I send out half of my force, or nearly so, to superintend the execution of a single man. One would suppose such a force sufficient for such a purpose. Was I to abandon the garrison entirely? Had I done so, what might have been the consequences? Instead of the mere rescue of the prisoner, the post might have been surprised and captured, with all its stores, and the garrison cut to pieces."

"Scarcely, if the reported force of the rebels be true. They do not seem to have had more than twenty men in all."

"You will permit me to ask, sir, how you arrive at this conclusion? I am not conscious of having made any definite report of the number of the rebels in this assault."

"No, Major Proctor; and this, I am sorry to observe, is a most unaccountable omission in your report. You had the evidence of a worthy loyalist, named Blonay, who distinctly told you that they numbered only twenty men."

"The deficiencies of my report, Colonel Balfour, seem to have been particularly supplied by other hands," was the ironical remark of Proctor, his eye glancing fiercely at Vaughan as he spoke; "but your informant is scarcely correct himself, sir, and has been too glad to assume, as a certainty, a report which was only conjectural. Blonay stated distinctly that there were twenty men *and more*. These were his very words. He did not say how many. His whole account was wretchedly confused, since his mind seems to have been distracted between the difficulty of rescuing his mother from the feet of the horse, by which she was really trampled to death, and the desire of taking revenge upon a single enemy, upon whom alone his eyes seem to have been fixed during the affair. This Blonay, sir, instead of being a worthy loyalist, is a miserable wretch, half Indian, and of no worth at all. He has an Indian passion for revenge, which, on this occasion, left him singularly incapable of a correct observation on any subject which did not involve the accomplishment of his passion. But, allowing that the rebels made their assault with but twenty men, it must be remembered that they effected a surprise —"

"Ah! that was the reproach, Major Proctor; there was the error, in allowing that surprise."

"But Balfour," said Cruden, "this seems to be quite unreasonable. A detachment of thirty men from the post, leaving but forty in charge of it, seems to be quite *largo enough*."

"That depends wholly on circumstances, Cruden," was the reply of Balfour, filling his glass.

"Exactly, sir," resumed Proctor; "and these circumstances were such as to call for a guard for the prisoner no stronger than that which I assigned it. But a few days had elapsed since Earl Cornwallis

totally defeated the rebel army at Camden. Were we to look for an effort of the rebels, in his rear, of this description? Did we not know that Marion, with his brigade, had joined himself to the force of Gates? and had we not every reason to suppose that he had shared its fate? The whole country was in our possession. Lord Rawdon held Camden; Colonel Stuart was at Ninety-Six; Orangeburg, Mottis, Watson's, Monk's Corner, Quimby—all posts garrisoned by ourselves; and our scouts brought no tidings of any considerable force of rebels embodied in any quarter."

"But the *inconsiderable*," answered Balfour.

"They were scarcely provided against in a force of thirty men, led by a competent officer, who sealed his devotion with his life."

"Why did you not take command of the escort yourself?" queried Balfour.

For a moment, an expression of strong disgust spread over the face of Proctor. But he replied, calmly—

"It might be a sufficient answer to say, that such was not my duty. The command of the post at Dorchester involved no obligation to assume the duties of a subordinate. But I will express myself more frankly. I could not have assumed this duty without violating some of the most precious feelings of humanity. I had enjoyed the hospitality of Colonel Walton; had shared his intimacy; and cherished a real esteem for the noble virtues of that gentleman, which his subsequent unhappy rebellion cannot obliterate from my mind. I could not have taken part in the terrible event of that day. I preferred, sir, as my duty allowed it, to withdraw from so painful a spectacle."

"Ah! that was the error—the great error. The soldier, sir, has obligations to his king superior to those of mere sentiment. I am sorry, Major Proctor—very sorry—not less for your sake, than because of the deep sympathy which I have with my friend, Cruden."

"But, Balfour," said Cruden, "it strikes me that John's course has been quite justifiable. With his force, he could not have detached from the garrison more than he did, as an escort for the rebel's execution. And, under the circumstances of the country, with Cornwallis so completely triumphant over Gates, and with our troops everywhere overawing every conspicuous point, there could be no reason to anticipate such a surprise as this. Now"—

"My dear Cruden, all this sounds very well; and were these things to be considered by themselves, I have no doubt the defence would be properly urged. But I am afraid that an evil construction may be placed upon the deep sympathy which our young friend seems to have felt for the family of this rebel. He seems to have been a frequent visitor at Walton's plantation."

"Only, sir, when Colonel Walton was understood to be a friend of my king and government."

"That he never was."

"He was admitted in our roll of friends among

the people of the country; and I have Lord Cornwallis's especial instructions to treat him with great courtesy and favor, in the hope of winning him over to active participation in our cause."

"Very true, sir; that *was* our object; but how long is it since this hope was abandoned? Could you have entertained it, my dear major, for a moment after your fruitless attempt to capture Singleton, the lieutenant of Marion, harbored by this very rebel—nay, rescued by Walton from your grasp, at the head of an armed force, which put you at defiance? Nay, I am not sure that the curious fact, that Walton suffered you to escape, though clearly in his clutches, will not make against you. Even since these events, it is understood that you have more than once visited the daughter of this rebel, alone, without any attendants, returning late in the evening to your post."

Proctor smiled grimly, as he replied—

"It will be something new, I fancy, to the officers of his majesty in Charleston and elsewhere, if it be construed into a treasonable affair when they visit a rebel damsel. But really, Colonel Balfour, this conversation assumes so much the appearance of a criminal investigation, that I see no other course before me than to regard it as a sort of court of inquiry. Perhaps, sir, I had better tender my sword, as under arrest. At all events, sir, permit me to demand a court of inquiry for the full examination of this affair."

He unbuckled his sword as he spoke, and laid it upon the table.

"What are you about, John? What need of this?" demanded Cruden. "I am sure that Balfour means nothing of the kind."

"Perhaps it is just as well, Cruden," answered Balfour, "that our young friend should so determine. I like to see young men fearless of investigation. Better he should invite the court than have it forced upon him; and you will see, from what I have said, that there is much of a suspicious nature in this affair which it is proper for him to clear up. But remember, my friends, what I have said has been said in a friendly spirit. I have too much regard for both of you to suffer you to be taken by surprise. You now see what points are to be explained, and what doubts discussed and settled."

This was all said very coolly; we shall not say civilly.

"I am deeply indebted to your courtesy, Colonel Balfour," answered Proctor, "and will be glad if you will still further increase my acknowledgments, by suffering me to know the sources of that information which, I perceive, has followed my footsteps as a shadow."

"Nay, now, my young friend, you must really excuse me. I should be happy to oblige you; but the nature of the affair, and the caution which is due to my situation, will not suffer me to comply with your desires. Excuse me. Let us have a glass all round."

"Stay," said Cruden; "am I to understand that John is deprived of his command at this post?"

"Most certainly," interposed Proctor, himself. "Until purged of these suspicions, I can certainly hold no station of trust in the service of his majesty."

"Your nephew has a right notion of these matters, Cruden," remarked Balfour; "but it will not be long. He will soon purge himself of these suspicions, and be in a situation to resume all his trusts."

"And to whom," said Cruden, "will you confide the post, meanwhile?"

"Who?—ay!" looking round. "I had thought of requesting our young friend, Vaughan, here, to administer its duties, and to take charge of the precincts of Dorchester."

Vaughan bowed his head quietly and respectfully, and, in a few calmly expressed words, declared his sense of the compliment. The keen eye of Proctor was fastened upon him with a stern and scornful glance, and, a moment after, he left the apartment, followed by his uncle.

"This is a most abominable affair, John," was his remark; "a most abominable affair!"

"Do you think so, sir? There would be nothing abominable about it, were there not a villain in the business."

"And that villain"—

"Is Vaughan! the servile tool of Balfour; the miserable sycophant, who fancies that ambition may be served by falsehood. But I shall crush him yet. His triumph is for the moment only."

### CHAPTER III.

"I'll keep her to her stint;

I'll put her to her pension:

She gets but her allowance—that's a bare one."

MIDDLETON.

THE sun was still an hour high when Balfour gave instructions to prepare his horses and a small escort, proposing a visit to the plantation called "The Oaks," the domain of the famous rebel, Colonel Walton.

"You will, of course, accompany me, Cruden. Your duties begin in this quarter. It is just as well that we should have this estate within our clutches as soon as possible, and before the alarm is taken. We will quarter ourselves upon the young lady to-night, and see how the land lies. Should she prove as beautiful as they describe, we shall make her a ward of the king, and dispose of her accordingly."

"In that event, you had best take her to the city."

"I shall most surely do so."

"I shall certainly be better pleased to take charge of the plantation in her absence. Our authority might, otherwise, conflict. With the dawn, we must proceed to gather up the negroes, and for this purpose I shall need your assistance. You will have a sufficient detachment with you?"

"Twenty men will do. There are some three hundred slaves, I understand, of all classes; and the fewer soldiers we employ in bringing these into the fold, the less heavy will be the assessment on the estate."

This was said with a grin, the meaning of which was perfectly understood by his associate.

"Does my nephew accompany us, Balfour?"

"If he chooses."

"I may need his assistance in the matter."

"You have brought your secretary?"

"Yes; but John is a ready fellow at accounts—  
as quick with the pen as with the sword;—besides, he knows something of the estate already, and may give some useful hints in respect to plate, horses, and other property, which these rebel women are apt to conceal."

"The plate generally finds its way into the cellar, or under some great oak-tree in the woods; but I have long been in possession of a divining rod, which conducts me directly to the place of safe-keeping. We have only to string up one of the old family negroes, and, with a tight knot under the left ear, and a little uneasiness in breathing, he soon disgorges all his secrets. But, in truth, these women seldom hide very deeply. It is usually at the very last hour that they consent to put away the plate, and then it is rather hurried out of sight than hidden. I have sometimes detected the hoard by the curn of a silver milk-pot, or the mouth of a coffee-urn, or the handle of a vase, sticking up unnaturally beside an old chimney in the basement. But see your nephew, and let us ride."

Cruden proceeded to Proctor's room; but, on the expression of his wish, was met by a firm and prompt refusal.

"How can you ask me, Colonel Cruden, to take part in this business? It is your duty, as the proper officer of the crown, and that is your apology. I should have none."

"I am afraid, John, you are quite too deeply interested in this beauty."

"Stop, sir; let us have nothing of this. Enough, that Miss Walton can never be to me more than she is. She is one always to command my respect, and I beg that she will yours. For my sake, sir, administer this unpleasant duty, upon which you go, with all possible tenderness and forbearance."

"I will, John, for your sake. To be sure I will."

And they separated—Balfour clamoring without, impatiently, for his companion, who soon after joined him. An easy ride of an hour brought them to the noble avenue, "The Oaks," which conducted, for half a mile, to the entrance of Colonel Walton's dwelling—a stately, sombre wood—the great, venerable trees arching and uniting completely over the space between, while their bearded mosses drooped to the very ground itself. The mansion was in a style of massive grandeur to correspond with so noble an entrance. The approach of the British party was known to the inmates, even before it had entered upon the avenue. These inmates consisted,

now, only of Colonel Walton's maiden sister, Miss Barbara—a lady of that certain age which is considered the most uncertain in the calendar—when, in fact, the spinster ceases to compute, even as she ceases to grow—and Katharine, the only daughter of the fugitive rebel himself. Katharine was still a belle and a beauty, and youthful accordingly. She might have been nineteen; and, but for the majestic and admirable form, the lofty grace of her carriage, the calm and assured expression of her features, the ease and dignity of her bearing—the fresh sweetness of her face, and the free, luxuriant flow of her long, ungathered locks, simply parted from her forehead, and left at freedom upon her neck and shoulders—would have occasioned a doubt whether she was quite sixteen. An obsequious negro, who rejoiced in the name of Baccus, without making any such exhibition of feature or conduct as would induce the suspicion that he was a worshiper at the shrine of that jolly divinity, received the British officers at the entrance, and ushered them into the great hall of the mansion. Their escort, having had previous instructions, was divided into two bodies, one occupying the front avenue, the other that which led to the river, in the rear of the building. But two persons entered the house with Balfour and Cruden—Captain Dickson, of the garrison, and one who knew the Walton family, and the secretary of Colonel Cruden.

It was not long before the ladies made their appearance. Though by no means disposed to waive any proper reserves of the sex, they were yet prepared to recognize the policy which counseled them to give no undue or unnecessary provocations to those to whose power they could offer no adequate resistance. Mrs. Barbara Walton—the old maid in those days being always a *mistress*, through a courtesy that could no longer regard her as a *miss*—led the way into the hall, dressed in her stateliest manner, with a great hoop surrounding her as a sort of *chevaux de frize* (*frieze*?)—a purely unnecessary defence in the present instance—and her head surmounted by one of those towers of silk, gauzes, ribands, and pasteboard, which were so fashionable in that day, and which reminded one of nothing more aptly than of the rude engravings of the Tower of Babel in old copies of the Bible, done in the very infancy of art. Poor Mrs. Barbara was a tame, good-natured creature, no ways decided in her character, upon whom a foolish fashion could do no mischief, but who was always playing the very mischief with the fashions. They never were more military in character than in her hands—leading to conquest only by the absolute repulsion of all assailants. Whether, at forty-five, this good creature fancied that it was necessary to put her defences in the best possible array against such a notorious gallant as Balfour, we may not say; but certainly she never looked more formidable on any previous occasion. Her very smiles were trenches, pitfalls for the invader—and every motion of her person, however gracefully intended, seemed like a "warning to



quit"—with a significant hint of "steel traps and spring guns" in waiting for trespassers.

Doubtless, the venerable maiden might have largely compelled the consideration of the British officers, but for the bright creature that appeared immediately behind her; and who, without any appearance of timidity or doubt, quietly advanced and welcomed the strangers, as if performing the most familiar office in the world. Balfour absolutely recoiled as he beheld her. So bright a vision had not often flashed across his eyes.

"By Jove," he muttered, at the first opportunity, to Cruden, "she *is* a beauty! What a figure!—what a face! No wonder your kinsman neglected his duties for his love."

"It is yet to be seen that he has done so," was the grave aside of Cruden.

"Having seen her," whispered Balfour, "I can believe it without further testimony."

We need not follow these asides. Katharine did the honors of the reception with an ease and dignity, which, while making the visitors at home, made it sufficiently evident that she felt quite as much what was due to her condition as to their claims. She wore the appearance of one who was conscious of all the cares, the responsibilities, and the dangers of her situation; yet without yielding to any of the fears or weaknesses which might be supposed, in one of her sex, to flow from their recognition. Her schooling had already been one of many trials and terrors. But her guests knew something of the training through which she had gone, and this rendered her bearing still more admirable in their sight. But her beauty, her virtue, her dignity, and character did not suffice, after the first impressive effect produced by her appearance, to disarm her chief visitor of any of his purposes. The usual preliminaries of conversation—such commonplaces of remark as belong to the ordinary encounters of persons in good society—having been interchanged as usual, and Balfour seized the opportunity of a pause, when his fair hostess, indeed, appeared to expect something from him in the way of a revelation, to break ground in regard to the ungracious business on which he came.

"It would greatly relieve me, Miss Walton," said he, with a manner at once seemingly frank as seemingly difficult, "if I could persuade myself that you, in some degree, anticipate the painful affair which brings me to your dwelling."

"That it is painful, sir, I must feel; and, without being able to conjecture what will be the form of your business, I can easily conceive it to be such as can be agreeable to none of the parties. To me, at least, sir, and to mine, I can very well conjecture that you bring penalty and privation at least."

"Nay, nay! Those, I trust, are not the words which should be used in this business. In carrying out the orders of my superior, and in prosecuting the service which is due to my sovereign, I shall certainly be compelled to proceed in a manner, ma-

terially to change your present mode of life; but that these will involve penalty and privation is very far from probable. The conduct of your father—his present attitude in utter defiance to the arms and authority of his majesty, and in total rejection of all the gracious overtures made to him, as well by Earl Cornwallis as by Sir Henry Clinton, leaves it impossible that we should extend to him any indulgence. As a rebel in arms!"

"Stay, sir!—you speak of my father. It is not necessary that you should say anything to his daughter's ear, save what is absolutely necessary that she should know. If I conceive rightly your objects in this visit, it is to visit upon my father's property the penalty of my father's offence."

"Pon my soul," whispered Cruden, "the girl speaks like a very Portia. She comes to the point manfully."

"You relieve me, Miss Walton; and, in some measure, you are correct," answered Balfour, interrupting her speech. "It could not be supposed that his majesty should suffer Colonel Walton to remain in possession of his property, while actually waging war against the British standard. Colonel Cruden, here, is commissioned by Lord Cornwallis to sequester his estates—their future disposal to depend wholly upon the final issues of the war."

Here Cruden interposed, by reciting the general terms of the British regulation in regard to the confiscated or sequestered estates of the rebels—enumerating all the heads of the enactment, and proceeding to details which left no doubt unsatisfied, no ambiguity which could lead to doubt, of the universal liability of the estate of the offender. Lands, houses, slaves; furniture and horses; plate and jewelry—"Of course, Miss Walton, the personal ornaments of a lady would be respected, and"—

Katharine Walton smiled quietly. This smile had its explanation, when the commissioner commenced his operations next day—but, though he was very far from conjecturing its signification, it yet struck him as something mysterious. Balfour, also, was impressed with the smile of Katharine, which seemed quite unnatural under the circumstances.

"You smile, Miss Walton."

"Only, perhaps, because he who anticipates the worst needs no such details as Colonel Cruden has bestowed on me. You are the masters here, I know. For myself, you see I wear no jewels. I had some toys, such as rings, brooches, chains, and watches, but I thought it unseemly that I should wear such ornaments, when the soldiers of my people wanted bread and blankets, and they all found their way, long since, to the money-chest of Marion."

"The devil!" muttered Cruden, in tones almost audible, though meant as an aside to Balfour. "It is to be hoped that the family plate has not taken the same direction."

"We shall see at supper, perhaps," was the whisper of Balfour.

Katharine Walton was seen again to smile. She

had possibly heard the apprehensions of Cruden. At least, she might reasonably have conjectured them. She resumed—

"And now, Colonel Balfour, that I am in possession of your determination, you will permit me to retire for awhile, in order that I may properly perform the duties of a hostess. For this night, at all events, I may reasonably be expected to act in this capacity, let to-morrow bring forth what it may."

"Stay—a moment, Miss Walton—I am not sure that you conceive all that we would say—all, in fact, that is appointed us to execute."

"Well, sir?"

"Lord Cornwallis has left it to my discretion to decide whether, as a ward of the crown, you should be left exposed to a dangerous propinquity with rebellion—whether, in short, it would not be advisable that one so lovely, and so worthy of his guardianship, should not be placed in safety within the walls of the city."

"Ha! that, indeed, is something that I had not anticipated. And this, sir, is left to your individual discretion?"

"It is, indeed, Miss Walton," replied the commandant, turning his eyes very tenderly upon hers, and throwing into his glance as much softness as could well consist with the leer of a satyr.

"Well, sir, I suppose that even this claim can

challenge nothing but submission. As I have said already, you are the master here."

She retired with these words.

"'Pon my soul, Cruden, the girl is a princess. With what a grace she yields! She seems no ways stubborn; and so beautiful! It ought not to be very difficult to thaw the heart of such a woman. That she has not been won before, is because they have never suffered her to come to the city."

"But, by —, should the plate have followed the jewels, Balfour?"

"The question is a serious one. We shall see at supper. Your kinsman might have said something of this matter, if he pleased. He must have seen, in his frequent visits, whether any display of plate was made."

"He did not visit frequently," said Cruden.

"Ah! but he did; too frequently for his good;—but here comes that gentlemanly negro; Bacchus, they call him. Such a name seems particularly suited to a butler. I think, Cruden, you had better send him to me. I like the fellow's manners. He has evidently been trained by a gentleman. Well, my man?"

"My lady begs to tell you, sir, that supper waits."

"Very well—show the way. Did you hear that, Cruden?—my lady! How these Provincials do ape nobility!"

(To be continued.)

## OUR POST-MISTRESS; OR, WHY SHE WAS TURNED OUT.

(See Plate.)

You've no doubt heard the important fact that our amiable post-mistress, who has had charge of the mails (not males) in the village of — (no, I won't let you publish the name), for the last ten years, has been removed. As all removals, under the present administration, are "for cause," of course there was a cause for the removal of Mrs. —. And now I am going to let you into a little secret touching the matter.

Colonel L— has a pretty daughter; and our young representative in Congress, Edward R—, has taken quite a fancy to her. Well, last February, when the whole village was agog about Valentines, R— was seen, by the post-mistress, who was glancing from the window, to deposit a letter in the box; and something in his manner satisfied her that it was a missive of more than usual importance. Curiosity prompted her to look at the superscription of the letter, when it was found to be directed to Miss Flora L—.

"It isn't hard to understand the meaning of that," said Mrs. — to herself, with a quiet smile of satisfaction.

Not long after, while the post-mistress was assorting and stamping the letters preparatory to closing the mail, a tall spinster, and a short, fat, plump maiden in her teens, came in to see and hear what was to be seen and heard.

"This is Valentine's Day," said the tall spinster, Miss Sprogle by name, as she sat herself down on the edge of a chair, and looked, with a curiosity not to be concealed, at the pile of letters on the table beside the post-mistress.

"Yes, I believe it is," replied Mrs. —.

"Lots of love-letters, I s'pose?" Miss Sprogle wriggled herself impatiently.

"Yes, I rather guess there are a few," said Mrs. —, with a knowing twinkle.

"Are these Valentines?" and Miss Sprogle came over to the table, and laid her hand on a pile of letters.

"Here is one, I know," replied the post-mistress, whose usual discreetness was leaving her.

"Oh, let me see it!" and the spinster snatched the letter from her hand. "This is a real Valentine, then. Let me see—To Miss Flora L—, O dear, goodness me! and it's to Flora. I wonder who sent it. Do you know?"

"I can guess," returned Mrs. —.

"Who? who?"

Mrs. — shook her head.

"Ah, do tell; just tell me. I'll never whisper a

word of it—not a word. You can trust me, you know. I'm a woman that can keep a secret."

"I'm most afraid. It might get me into trouble. It was mere accident that I saw him drop it in the box."

"Who? who?" was eagerly inquired.

Mrs. — hesitated.

"Come, now, that's a dear, good soul. Just tell me and Lizzy, and we'll never breathe a word of it. Will we, Lizzy?"

"No, indeed," replied the fat girl; "that we won't."

"Well, I'll just tell you in confidence," said the post-mistress, thus urged; "in the strictest confidence. I saw Edward R— drop it in."

"R—! Ah, ha! he's after Miss Flora, is he?" Miss Sprogle's face was instantly all animation. "I wonder what's in it?" was added, in a moment after; and up went the letter to her curious eyes. For some time, she eagerly sought to connect in sentences the written words she saw. At length, she began reading aloud, turning the letter from side to side in her hand as she progressed:—

"Lovely Flora! gentle lady!

Winning hearts where'er thy smile

Glances, like a sunbeam falling

On some lonely, desert isle.

I now pledge thee life and fortune,

Offer all I hold most dear;

Swear no thought—"

Beyond this, Miss Sprogle could not go, try as she would to trace the lines concealed by the envious folds of the paper.

"That's pretty nice, isn't it?" said she, as the letter was withdrawn from her eyes. "Lovely Flora! sunbeams! swearing, and all that. Let me look at it again," and the lines were scanned a second time.

On the next day, it was known all over the village that Flora L— had received a Valentine from the young M. O., and that the verse above quoted was in it. How Miss Sprogle came by her intelligence on the subject she was prudent enough to keep to herself; but her fat friend Lizzy was not so discreet; she told a very particular friend the whole story of Miss Sprogle's spying into the Valentine; and she told her particular friend, who happened to be living in Mr. R—'s family; and she, in turn, told R—'s sister, who told him.

Of course, R— was as angry as a reasonable man ought to have been under the circumstances;



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and vowed, on the spot, that the post-mistress should be turned out. And, sure enough, before two months went by, an order for her removal was received; and she resigned her post, though with rather a bad grace. No reason for the removal being given by the Department, Mrs. ——— declares hers to be a case of proscription for opinion's sake, she being

opposed in politics to the administration. Whether she has really guessed at the true reason, we know not; but when she reads this she will be no longer in doubt.

So now you know why our post-mistress was removed.

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## PHILIP HAMILTON AND HIS MOTHER.

BY GRACE GREENWOOD.

I REMEMBER to have spent a few weeks of last autumn with a dear friend, the wife of an eminent physician in one of our inland cities. My friend was a woman of fine intellect, much feeling, and large experience of life. She was a delightful companion, an admirable hostess; and I shall never cease to think of her with grateful and pleasurable emotions.

One rainy, October day, Mrs. Allen, her eldest daughter, and myself were together, in the pleasant little library, where we usually spent our mornings. Mrs. Allen, I remember, was seated with a huge work-basket at her side, busily engaged in darning hose, of all sizes, from the ample sock of the stout doctor, down to the wee stocking of little Jenny. Miss Laura was bending gracefully over her embroidery frame; and I was reclining, after my own indolent fashion, on a comfortable lounge, reading aloud the "Princess" of Tennyson; drowning the sounds of the storm without by the sweet musical flow of its verse, filling the darkened hours with the golden enchantment of its gay romance. This was our second reading; and, after an hour or two, the volume was finished. As I read, softly and lingeringly, that last line,

"Lay thy sweet hands in mine, and trust to me,"

and then closed the book, I remember that Mrs. Allen and Laura looked up from their work, saying, sadly, as with one voice, "Is that all?"

I remained silent, with a listless, dreamy recollection of pleasure; my thoughts still chiming to the delicious melody of that unique and delightful poem. After awhile, I raised my eyes and fixed them upon a picture, on the opposite wall—a portrait, which I had not before noticed particularly.

"That is a very lovely face, Mrs. Allen," I remarked. "Is it the likeness of any one of your family?"

"No," she replied; "the original was not even a relative, but was the dearest and most intimate friend of my early life. Pray tell me what you read in her face."

"I should say that the lady possessed great sweetness and pliancy of disposition; a thoughtful, but not by any means a powerful mind. I should say that she was exceedingly sensitive, capable of intense suffering, but quite incapable of defending herself from wrong, or even of resenting it with much spirit."

"You are quite right," said my friend, "you have read her character very clearly. Ah, poor girl, she

had a sad history of her own. Should you like to hear it?"

"Oh, by all means!" was my reply.

My friend laid aside her work; and, fixing her eyes on the picture for a moment, began her simple narrative, which I will endeavor to give in her own words, as near as I can remember.

Laura Ellerton (you see that I named my daughter for this friend) was my schoolmate and roommate for three years; and we became, from necessity and inclination, most intimate and tenderly attached. Laura was a singularly unselfish, humble, and affectionate being, for one so beautiful, gifted, and attractive, every way, as she then was. That portrait does not give one a just idea of her early loveliness, as it was taken at the age of twenty-five, when she had already begun to fade. Laura was not wealthy. Her mother was a widow of limited means, who, mother-like, often deprived herself of the very comforts of life to be able to educate thoroughly and dress tastefully her idolized daughter.

After leaving school, my friend and I, as might have been expected, kept up a brisk and voluminous correspondence. For the first year, our letters were filled with those little nothings, descriptions of parties, dresses, rides, and rambles; all the small events and innocent gayeties which form the life of young girls who are just going into society; but after that, they gradually grew more thoughtful and confidential. I believe that I was first in love and engaged; but being rather careful and sensitive, said as little as possible, even to her, on my heart affairs. But Laura was one to whom sympathy was a very necessity, air, life. First came significant hints about a certain young lawyer, who had lately settled at R—; then followed glowing descriptions of his superb figure, his splendidly handsome face; and enthusiastic praises of his genius, his acquirements, and the quiet elegance of his manner. His attentions to her were gratefully chronicled, and all his little compliments minutely, yet modestly reported. At first, it was "Mr. Kingsbury;" but after a little while, it was "Arthur Kingsbury;" and in a very short time, it was "dear Arthur." They were engaged. Ah, then, what letters she wrote! How full of sentiment, happiness, gratitude, love—no, love is a feeble word—*adoration*. She absolutely worshipped her handsome and gifted lover—an homage most sweet and delightful to the interesting idol, doubtless, but which it was unworthy weakness in her to yield. Thus she continued to write for nearly a year, and then her letters suddenly ceased altogether.

About that time, I was married. I wrote to Laura, reminding her of an old promise to be my bridesmaid. I only received, in reply, a few hurried lines from Mrs. Ellerton, stating that her daughter could not possibly attend the wedding, as she was considerably out of health; but that she sent her "dearest love" and "fondest wishes."

On my return from our bridal tour, I wrote again to Laura, intreating her to write and relieve my great anxiety. She did write, at last; and such a letter! It was sad and touching beyond description. It was blotted with tears—was itself like the long, low sob of a broken heart. Her lover had left her; was already married to another! and yet there was no bitterness, no harsh resentment in her feeling toward him. But stay, I have that letter in my writing-desk. Here it is. After making the announcement I have mentioned, she writes thus:—

"I heard, for some time, hints and whispers concerning Arthur's attentions to Miss Earle, a lady of high connections and considerable fortune, who was visiting in our village; but I could not believe that his heart was turned from me, until he himself came to me, and requested to be released from his engagement; telling me that he had been mistaken in thinking that he loved me as deeply as he might love. He begged me to forgive him for all the pain he had caused me; and I have done so, even as I hope to be forgiven for my own errors and sins.

"I can never think, as others think, that Arthur has been influenced by mercenary motives. Miss Earle, though not very young nor beautiful, is intellectual and highly accomplished; and you know that I am neither. Oh! how vain and presuming I have been ever to believe that he could love *me*, a simple village girl; he, with his glorious genius, his noble presence, and all his rare attainments. Oh, Alice, sometimes comes the bitter, bitter thought that he divined my interest in him, at the first, and was led, by generous pity, to ask me for the love which he knew in his soul was his already!

"Dear Alice, do not think hard of him. How could he give his hand to me when there was one he so much preferred. He looked sadly troubled at that last interview. I saw it, and pressed my hand hard against my heart, to keep down the sobs and shrieks with which it seemed almost bursting. I did not reproach him. I did not even weep; and though I was quite still and silent, I gave him my hand kindly, as he rose to go, and *tried* to smile on him as he looked back at me for the last time.

"I remember nothing of what passed after that, for some days. Dear mother tells me that she found me sitting by the table, cold and white as marble, and utterly insensible. I believe I had something like a brain fever; but I was not conscious of much suffering. Now I am better, much better—almost well, indeed, though my kind friends are yet troubled by my colorless cheek and languid step. During the day, I try to be cheerful and courageous, for dear mother's sake; but at night, oh, Alice, at night,

I often lie awake through long hours, dreadful hours, and weep in my lonely sorrow, till my very heart seems dissolved in tears. Then, I sometimes reach up my clasped hands, and cry, through the darkness, 'Oh, Father in heaven, have mercy! Bind up my wounded heart, and fill it with *thy* love!' Then I pray for *him*—pray that his life may be rich in love and crowned with blessings; and so I always grow calm and fall asleep.

"But the day of Arthur's marriage—ah, I must unlearn my heart that trick of calling him *Arthur*—I mean Mr. Kingsbury's marriage, I could not conceal my unhappiness. I was weak, despairing, almost wild; and I could find no rest but in the arms of my mother, pressed close against her heart, with her dear hand laid on my hot brow, or tenderly wiping away the tears which gushed forth irrepressibly and incessantly. When we knew that the hour had gone by, dear mother prayed in a low, fervent voice, that divine strength might be given to her child to overcome that love which had been to her a snare and a temptation, and had now become a sin. When she ceased, I lifted up my head calmly, feeling that God's peace had descended to my heart.

"Now, dear Alice, do not be troubled for me. All will yet be well. I need only patience, and trust in the goodness of our Father, who knoweth what is best for us."

As you may suppose, I shed many a tear over this touching letter from poor Laura. I could but wonder, however, that she bore her trial so well; clingingly dependent, fond, and devoted as I knew her to be. I think I was right in ascribing much of her strength to the calm, sustaining affection of her mother.

My husband and I both wrote to Mrs. Ellerton and Laura, inviting them to spend the winter with us, amid all the fresh glories and new dignities of young housekeeping. Mrs. Ellerton replied at once, accepting the invitation for her daughter; but stating that, as she had near relatives in P——, she should not be able to make her home at our house. They came on together, however, and we had a pleasant little visit from Mrs. Ellerton, who was a woman of strong, yet beautiful character.

Laura was, indeed, changed; so much sunshine had faded from her face. Then she had grown exceedingly delicate, pale, quiet; yet, perhaps, more lovely than ever—a sort of moonlight beauty. When we were alone together, I found that she, unlike her former self, carefully avoided all reference to Kingsbury; and as I, for my part, heartily despised and detested the man, his name was never mentioned between us.

We had a very pleasant winter. Laura gradually regained much of her old serene cheerfulness, and endeared herself greatly to our hearts. Ah, her music! I never can forget it. Her playing was very fine; but her singing, of Scotch songs and old ballads especially, was something peculiarly and

incredibly delightful. There was one who was greatly charmed and won by it, and by the sweet singer herself. This was Mr. Hamilton, a constant visitor at our house—a distant relative, but a near friend of my husband. He had been for some years the congressional representative from our district; and was a man of worth and influence, as well as of distinction. He was about thirty-five, and had never been married.

After a month or two, it became quite obvious that dear Laura had made a deep impression on the heart of our honorable friend. The doctor and I were duly delighted; Mrs. Ellerton seemed pleased, and Laura, apparently, was not displeased, though she gave no evidence of being seriously impressed in her turn. Yet when she found that she was indeed loved, truly, generously, and tenderly, by Mr. Hamilton, her heart, so lately wounded and humiliated, very naturally went out toward him, in a glad, affectionate gratitude, which was almost love. But hers was a truthful and honorable nature; and, withdrawing the hand which she had yielded in the first impulse of her kindly feeling, and modestly casting down her eyes, she told him all the sad story of her love and her sorrow. When this was finished, she said, in a low, trembling voice: "So it is, dear friend, that *love* seems to have withered, died in my heart; so it is that I can only give you a tender and devoted *friendship*. And oh! what a return were this for your beautiful and noble love, with all its fervency and concentration."

Mr. Hamilton rose, and walked up and down the room several times, with a troubled brow. He had hoped for something better than this—for the fresh, impassioned love; the virgin trust; the early warmth and devotion of that pure young being. But presently, he paused, and looked toward Laura. She was sitting by the table, her head supported by her hand, her eyes concealed by the white, slender fingers; but he saw that her cheek paled and flushed, and her lips quivered incessantly. He drew near; and gently lifting that fair hand, and gazing down into those eyes, those mild and earnest eyes, said, "And so, you have suffered, dear Laura; are still sorrowful. Ah, then, more than ever do you need such tenderness and devotion as I can give you. If it is not mine to console you, let me, at least, drink part of your bitter cup; if I may not give you happiness, let me share in your sorrows."

The generous feeling, the "loving kindness" of these words quite overcame Laura with gratitude and admiration. She rose impulsively, yet timidly, to meet his extended arms; and smiling and weeping alternately, leaned against his breast, feeling that she had there found protection, security—her rest.

On the anniversary of my own marriage, there was a second wedding in our house—Laura Ellerton to Augustus Hamilton.

This union proved a happy one—quietly and soberly happy. Laura was a good wife; neat, careful, cheerful, and equable in temper; and Hamilton

was altogether the husband so generous a lover promised to be.

During the third year of her wedded life, Mrs. Hamilton suffered a great bereavement in the death of her noble mother. But there was given to her a sweet comfort—a dear little babe, whose loveliness and infant smiles had power to charm trouble from all her thoughts. She named this son—who proved an only child—Philip, for her own father, whom she pleasantly, though imperfectly remembered.

When this boy was about nine years of age, Mr. Hamilton died, very suddenly, from a disease of the heart. My husband was called to him about midnight, and by daybreak he was dead. The doctor said that he suffered much, and was scarcely conscious until just at the last, when he asked for his "dear little boy," kissed the frightened and weeping child very tenderly; kissed and blessed his "gentle wife," his "sweet Laura," and drew her fair head down on his bosom, and died.

Laura was a sincere, though not a passionate and despairing mourner. She had never loved her husband *passionately*; but she had loved him with a true and ever-growing affection, and grieved long and deeply for his loss.

From that time, she gave herself up with singular devotion, to the care and education of her darling son, of whom she had been left sole guardian. And Philip was no common boy. With rare beauty, and a delicate, nervous organization, I think he was the most wondrously precocious child I have ever known. He scarcely seemed a *child*; he had few of the habits, and little or no taste for the usual sports of children. Studious, poetical, and strangely serious, he cared for nothing but books, music, and the society of his mother. His love for his beautiful mother was a deep, absorbing sentiment—the one only love of his life. He shrank from all boyish associates, and rough, out-door exercises, suited to his age and sex, and sought only to sit by her side and pore over his books, hour after hour; to listen to her singing in the evening, and to accompany her in her short strolls and unfrequent drives.

As a matter of course, the boy grew up nervous, painfully sensitive, and delicate to fragility; and though very lovely and interesting, one could not look upon his pale, poetic face, or gaze once into his large, dark eyes, so absolutely luminous with soul, without sad, foreboding thoughts. The angel of sorrow seemed to have set his seal on that high, white forehead—smooth and childish forehead though it was.

At the early age of fourteen, Philip Hamilton, after passing a brilliant examination, entered college, at New Haven.

Ah, then, how sad and lonely became the life of his poor mother. She had, literally, no one near her to love. My own duties and cares confined me almost entirely at home, and Laura was never greatly given to visiting; so we were not together as much as I now feel that we should have been



One day—I shall never forget that time of surprise and bewilderment—I went over to Laura's, taking my work, thinking to spend the day with her, hoping thus to renew our old intimacy. I was shown into the parlor, where I found my friend, seated on the same sofa with a tall and handsome stranger; a man of about forty-five, I should say. This person's face, even at the first glance, struck me as peculiar. It was faultlessly, coldly regular. The lips were full and warm, yet not pliable; but firm-set, as by the force of a strong will. His eyes were blue, yet looked intensely dark, from a certain sternness of expression, and the shadowing of the thick, black eyelashes and projecting brows.

With a flushed cheek and an agitated manner, Laura presented this gentleman as *Mr. Kingsbury*. I might have known it was him! He rose, and bowed courteously; almost transfixing me with a keen, searching look from out his ambushed eyes. I found him rather interesting in conversation; yet there was a sort of imperiousness in his manner, and a superciliousness in his voice, which disturbed and annoyed me; and, after a little talk with Laura, constrained on both sides, I took leave—Laura, for the first time, not urging me to stay.

On my return home, I ascertained, from my husband, that *Mr. Kingsbury* had lately returned from Europe, where he had been spending a number of years, with his family; that he had lost his wife and only son, in Italy; and was now living, very modestly, in our city, on the small remains of his fortune, with his daughter, *Miss Antoinette*, a showy and handsome, but a very heartless young lady, as it afterwards proved.

A few days after my inopportune call, I again met *Mr. Kingsbury*, who was then walking out, with Laura leaning on his arm. They did not at first perceive the doctor and me. They were strolling along very slowly; the gentleman looking down and talking earnestly, while Laura looked up with a most confiding expression of face. I thought that I never had seen her look so handsome and happy. Oh, this first love!

Thus matters went on, till Laura and that old lover of hers—thus returned, after so many years, to his allegiance—became almost inseparable; thus went on, until, one Sabbath morning, in our church, the proud and stately *Arthur Kingsbury* was wedded to the gentle and still beautiful widow of *Augustus Hamilton*.

For the next year, I saw less than ever of my early friend, as neither the doctor nor myself were at all pleased with her lordly husband, who seemed, on his part, to regard us with distrust, if not positive dislike. I heard, however, from time to time, painful rumors that Laura's second marriage had not proved so happy as she had probably hoped. *Mr. Kingsbury*, it was said, was a stern and exacting, yet careless and neglectful husband; and *Miss Antoinette* was far from affectionate or respectful toward her stepmother.

But Laura told nothing of these things, even to

me, to whom the paling of her cheek and the waning of her smile betrayed that all was not well in her home and in her heart.

But with the second year of her second union, there came a new and terrible sorrow to poor Laura—a sorrow which she could not hide. Her son *Philip*, her beautiful and gifted boy, was brought home from college *insane*!

Yes, his peculiar habits of study; his devouring passion for acquirement; his intense absorption and tireless application, robbing him of sleep and wholesome exercise, had at last done their work—unstrung his nerves and disordered his brain.

The poor boy's case was not pronounced utterly hopeless; he had intervals of perfect sanity, though his frenzy was very violent at times. It happened, unfortunately, that he took, from the first, a terrible dislike to his stepfather, who was weak and hard enough to return this hatred with interest. Toward his mother, *Philip* was always gentle and tractable when his stepfather was not by; but not even her presence could repress the jealous rage and defiant scorn which the sight of her husband excited.

*Mr. Kingsbury*, with the petty malice of a mean spirit, resented these ravings of insanity; and, in his cruel heart, resolved to punish the poor, crazed boy. To this end, he dismissed my husband, and employed a physician of the old school—a stanch advocate of the horrible system for curing insanity with bolts and bars, chains and scourging. I have been told that Laura went down on her knees to her husband, begging that her dear boy might not be confined in the rough, straight-waistcoat prepared for him; that no chain or cord might touch his delicate limbs; that he should not be humiliated by a blow. She was by when that darling son was first struck by her unfeeling husband. That blow was the death-blow to her own poor heart! She sprang forward, and caught the uplifted arm of the angry man; then suddenly reeled and fell; and, as she fell, a small, crimson stream oozed from her lips. She had ruptured a blood-vessel!

After this, Laura was very ill for some weeks; and though she so far recovered as to be able to walk about her room, and even to ride out occasionally, she never was well again.

In his seasons of sanity, *Philip* was always at her side; and never was there a more tender and assiduous nurse. When his fits of frenzy came on, he would be taken from her and confined in a small, scantily furnished room, in a remote wing of the large house, and she would see and know no more of him for some days. But his wild cries would sometimes reach her in the still night-hours, while her troubled heart was keeping the vigils of its sorrow; but she dared not stir, or weep aloud, for fear she should disturb the soulless slumberer at her side.

Most fortunately, *Philip* had no distinct recollection of what passed in his periods of insanity; and, when himself, was courteous in his manner toward *Mr. Kingsbury* and his daughter; and yet one might

observe an instinctive and involuntary shrinking from them both at all times.

As Laura drooped and failed, I visited her more frequently, and spent many hours in her sick-room. I saw that Philip clung to her more and more closely as it became evident, even to him, that she was about to leave us. It was touching to witness the intense, anguished solicitude of his deep, idolatrous love. And, oh, it was affecting beyond description, to see the poor boy, as his sudden frenzy came on, torn from the very bedside of his dying mother, and remanded to his cheerless, solitary confinement.

At her pleading request, my husband attended Mrs. Kingsbury as her physician. He saw at once that her fate was sealed, that she was dying; and though he visited her constantly and gave her medicine, week after week and month after month, he felt that all was of no avail, and this he frankly told her. She received the sad intelligence with meek resignation, though she grieved much at the thought of leaving her poor, afflicted boy to the utter desolation and peculiar sorrow of his lot.

I well remember the last dread hour—the death-bed scene. It was just at midnight that she died. I had been with her all the afternoon and evening. Doctor Allen came in about ten o'clock, and was immediately struck by the change which had taken place in the sufferer. I had thought her asleep, but he pronounced her insensible. In this state she remained for more than an hour longer; then she revived, and seemed quite herself. In a low tone, she asked for her husband. Mr. Kingsbury came forward, and took her hand in his. Laura raised to his face a timid, appealing look, as she said, "Dear Arthur, if I have not been in all things a loving and obedient wife, say you forgive me, before I go."

"Oh, Laura," he murmured, "it is for *you* to forgive. Tell me that I have your pardon for all—*all*."

Her answer was to press the hand she held against her heart, while the tears slid slowly from her half-closed eyelids. Mr. Kingsbury turned away, and sat down, at a little distance, hiding his face in his handkerchief. I think he *felt* then; I even think he *wept* some.

Laura lay for some time with her eyes closed, and quite still; then she looked up, and spoke one word, very distinctly—"Philip."

The boy, who had been kneeling at the foot of the bed, weeping silently, rose, came to his mother's side, and bent over her, sobbing aloud. She wound her arms round his neck, and kissed him many, many times; but said, calmly, "Philip, my child, my dear, dear boy, I must go from you; God calls me, and I must go, though my very soul seems cleft in twain by this parting."

"Oh, mother, mother!" he cried, "do not leave me alone! I cannot, will not live without your love!"

"My dear son," she murmured, "we may not be altogether separated. If it is permitted, I will come to you, and be often with you; will watch over

you, 'even to the end.' I know, my son, you will never forget your mother; but remember, also, your Father in heaven; and God will comfort you."

Very soon after speaking these words, the loving heart of the mother ceased to throb—the broken heart of the wife was at rest.

When Philip saw that she was indeed gone, he sprang up, with all the quick motion and wild air of insanity. Shriek after shriek broke from his foamy lips, while his distended eyes seemed to shoot forth live flame! In a few moments, he was secured, and borne forcibly to his distant and lonely apartment.

The next night, my husband and I both went to Mr. Kingsbury's to watch with the body of our beloved friend. It happened that, about midnight, the doctor was called to a patient who was extremely ill; and I was left alone—alone with the dead. But I was not superstitious, and could not be afraid of dear Laura, you know. I sat down by the couch on which lay extended her slender, symmetrical form—looking so strangely tall, then, I remember—and laying back the thin muslin from her fair, sweet face, gazed upon it long and mournfully. I thought of the first time I saw her, and how she blushed and smiled when we were introduced. I recalled the very words she first spoke to me, and even remembered just how she was dressed then. I thought of our school frolics and little troubles; of our one brief quarrel, when I was wholly to blame. I thought of all, all, till my tears fell fast on that still face, and those cold, clasped hands.

Suddenly, I was roused by a strange, startling sound, at a little distance. It struck a chill to my heart, for it seemed the rattle of a chain! Nearer and nearer it came, up the long hall, ringing on its marble floor; then paused at the door of Laura's room, which opened quickly, and young Philip entered. He was pale, to ghastliness; some locks of his long, black hair were hanging over his face; his dress was disordered; and from about one of his ankles, hung a small iron chain, which, it seems, he had wrenched from its staple, in the floor of his room. These were the means by which he was confined when more than usually violent.

Now, I saw at once, by the expression of his eye, that he was perfectly sane. He did not appear to notice me, as he came eagerly toward the couch where his mother was wont to lie—where she was now laid. When he saw the still attitude, the rigid lips, the death seal on the brow, he clasped his hands together and groaned aloud. Then he flung himself down by her side, and wound his arms about her, and laid his head against her breast, and cried, "Oh, mother, mother; I thought it was a dream that you were dead—I thought it was a dream that you were dead!"

I was presently relieved beyond expression by the return of my husband; and we two finally succeeded in calming the keen anguish of the orphan boy.

After the funeral, with the ready acquiescence of

Mr. Kingsbury, we took Philip home with us, to be for a time as one of our own.

Mr. Kingsbury was not appointed the guardian of Philip. Laura left in my care a long letter, commending the unfortunate lad to the affection and guardianship of the only brother of his father, Dr. Hamilton, a wealthy old bachelor, and a distinguished physician of New York.

Within a fortnight after this letter was forwarded, Dr. Hamilton arrived in P——, and came directly to our house. We were all charmed with him. I never saw a more benevolent face; and his manner was unequalled for courteous kindness. Philip, though naturally reserved, was won by it at once; and I saw, with inexpressible pleasure, that the good man seemed disposed, from the first, to take his afflicted ward home to his heart, and to make him the object of all his love and care.

Philip's property was found to be in a sad condition, and many weeks were spent in business arrangements. The Kingsburys, of course, left his house, which was let to a good tenant. The furniture was sold, principally; but those articles most sacred from dear associations, were confided to my care. That portrait was Philip's parting gift to me. He had an admirable miniature of his mother, which he wore next his heart always.

During this time, Philip was but once insane, and that for only a few hours. How different was his treatment from what it had formerly been. He was now watched over, but not constrained; his poor burning head was constantly bathed; he was spoken to kindly, and ministered to patiently, and *no one testified any fear of him*.

It was with real sorrow that we parted from the dear boy, at last; yet we knew that it was best he should go from us.

In the course of a month, we received a very kind letter from Dr. Hamilton. He was about to sail for Europe, with Philip, where they might spend some years, for the pleasure, instruction, and perfect restoration of the young man.

After this, Philip wrote to us occasionally from various parts of Europe. His letters were exceedingly interesting, and cheerful in tone; but, as he was painfully sensitive in regard to his peculiar mental disease, we could learn nothing in particular about his health, though he always said he was well. Finally, from some cause or other, he ceased to write, and we heard no more from him.

As many as seven years from the time of Laura's death, I was spending some weeks of the winter with a friend in New York. One night, we all attended one of the upper-ten parties—an immense affair. Early in the evening, I heard many comments on the beauty and talent of a young English lady, who was then playing for us; and, with some difficulty, made my way toward the piano, to catch a glimpse of the performer. She was, indeed, lovely; with a fair, mild face, and a full, yet grace-

ful figure—a true little English woman, sweet and healthful. But I did not observe her closely then, for my attention was riveted to the face of a gentleman who was standing at her side, turning the leaves of the music for her. I thought I had never seen so noble, so spiritually beautiful a countenance. It was the face of a stranger, surely; and yet there was something familiar, something dear, something which stirred my heart, in it. Presently, the young man happened to look round and meet my eye. He started, and took a step toward me, as though he would speak; then hesitated, as I did not advance, and regained his place by the piano. I turned; and, passing through room after room, at last found myself alone in the cool and quiet conservatory; and here I sat myself to the work of remembering when and where I had ever met that face. But in vain; I was completely bewildered. Suddenly, I heard a quick step, looked round, and the stranger was at my side!

"Mrs. Allen, dear Mrs. Allen!" he said, extending his hand.

I took it, mechanically; looking sadly puzzled, I suppose.

"Is it possible that you do not recollect me?" he said, with a sort of mournful smile.

Oh, that smile! how it brought *her* back—poor Laura!—and then I knew her son!

"Philip Hamilton!" I cried; "my dear boy!" and, forgetting that he had grown to be a young man, a tall and elegant young man, I flung my arms about his neck, and kissed him repeatedly.

Then we sat down, and had a good long talk by ourselves. Philip told me that, on his complete restoration to health, he had studied medicine, with the intention of devoting himself exclusively to the treatment of insanity; that, having acquired his profession, he had now returned to his native land to carry out this philanthropic purpose. He said that he had married in England, and begged leave to present his young wife, whom, he said, he had first loved for her name, which was Laura. I bowed a pleased assent; and he darted off, to return in a moment with the charming pianist leaning on his arm.

Mrs. Hamilton was very affectionate in her greeting; and, among other pleasant things which she said, told me that Philip had promised her a visit to P—— early in the spring.

"Yes," added Philip, "we are all coming then. Uncle Richard often speaks of the doctor, and still oftener of the doctor's wife."

"Then your good uncle is still living," I remarked.

"Yes; and long may he be spared to us! I know not how we could live without the dear old man—Heaven bless him!"

And, in my deep heart, I responded—"The dear old man—Heaven bless him!"

## THE EARL'S DEATH-BED; OR, THE FORCE OF CONSCIENCE.

BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT, ESQ., AUTHOR OF "THE ROMAN TRAITOR," "CROMWELL," "THE BROTHERS,"  
"MARMADUKE WYVIL," ETC. ETC.

It was as wild a night as ever closed over the green face of England, in mingled storm and darkness. The northeast wind came howling in from the tortured billows of the Northern Sea, sweeping the salt spray inland fast and far before it. Wild sheets of torn and shattered wrack fleeted across the dim and moonless skies, blotting the faint light of the stars, which alone, at long intervals, were visible among the gloom.

Fearfully groaned the huge, immemorial oaks which stood—unusually grand, and massy, and luxuriant, considering their vicinity to the storm-beaten Yorkshire coast of the German ocean—around the gorgeous pile of Huntcliff castle; the creaking and rolling of their monstrous arms, in the lulls of the tempest, conveying a more dismal and lugubrious impression to the listener's ear than all the rage and uproar of the blast.

But these were not the only sounds which were heard that night by the inmates of the ancient castle. A far off, deep, ceaseless, and majestic, that grandest of all earthly sounds, the voice of the eternal sea, bursting in thunders louder than those of heaven upon the iron barriers of that awful coast, loaded the gale with its solemn burden; while nearer yet to the rocking walls of the huge edifice, the sharp and re-echoed roar of a swollen torrent chafing among the crags, rose on the ear distinct and unmingled with the mightier chorus of the ocean billows.

Added to these, the baying of the large, savage bear-dogs in the castle court, and the fierce screams of a half-tamed eagle—an heir-loom of the house, chained through three generations, as tradition said, on a projecting bartizan above the rocky chasm of the river, sufficed to render the night truly horrible and hideous.

And yet there was that passing within, that night, which needed no addition of the grand or terrible.

In any event, death is a strange and awful mystery. The change which we have all beheld, must all undergo; but which no one of us, the wisest and most intellectual no more than the simplest and the weakest minded, can comprehend or fathom.

But there are circumstances under which death becomes not merely a phenomenon, mysterious, inconceivable, and awful or affecting; but a portent, terrific, horrible, appalling, and taxing to the utmost the physical and moral courage of those who are compelled to witness it.

And such was the character of the scene which was that night passing in a large chamber of the loftiest tower of Huntcliff castle. So high, indeed,

was the site of the old Norman keep itself, and so dizzy was the elevation of that topmost turret, that it was said and believed of all the neighborhood, that the old lord's lamp, which burned there nightly till the stars were waxing pale in the heavens, could be distinctly seen in the three northern counties, as well as over the three Yorkshire ridings; and whether this was sooth or no, certain it is that he on whose way, as he lagged homeward from fair or market, weary and belated, a ray fell from that haunted turret, crossed himself if he were of the olden faith, and breathed a prayer to the Virgin; or muttered to himself, if of the reformed religion, a prayer for protection against the powers of darkness.

The Earl of Huntcliff was a man advanced, as it was believed, in years beyond the utmost limits of natural human life.

It was known that, since his birth, seven kings, and one greater than a king, the wonderful Protector, had filled the throne of England; for Anne had, in this very year, succeeded the third William, and when the Earl first drew his maiden sword, *she* held the sceptre who told her people, in the hour of peril, that, "although her body was that of a weak woman, she had the heart of a king within her, and a king, too, of England."

And those high words were heard of him on that day, when she reviewed her host, armed *cap-à-pie*, at Tilbury, who now lay struggling in the pangs of mortal agony.

Above a century and a quarter had passed over the head of the stern, dark old lord; and yet, until the day on which he was death-stricken, he might have passed for the junior of men who might have been his grandsons' grandsons.

Except that his hair was as white as the drifted snow, he gave, to the very last, no sign of advanced age. His eagle eye was as bright and piercing as in his prime of manhood. His stately figure, tall beyond the ordinary height of men, was unbowed as the pine tree on the mountains. His iron strength of limb, his more than iron hardihood of constitution, were unbroken. When William of Nassau ascended, or, as he termed it—for he was of the old religion, and a follower of the luckless Stuarts—usurped the throne of England, already in his hundred and fifteenth year, he had beaten off, with his own single sword, three Dutch dragoons at the Boyne water, and slain the stoutest of the three.

And there were many who believed—nor they of the lower classes only, for that was a superstitious age—that it was by art magic that his life and

DEATH BED OF THE REV JOHN WESLEY.



physical powers were protracted to a period so unnatural.

But had it been possible for those who so believed, to look into the secrets of that old man's soul, to know his inmost thoughts, to see the phantoms with which his solitude was peopled, sitting beside him at the board, mounting the charger's back behind him; yea, watching by his pillow during the watches of the sleepless night, they had ceased to believe that the most life-loving of mankind would have sought any means to prolong such an existence.

For his whole life was agony—one act of unchanging agony. Alone, or in companionship; awake or sleeping; tranquil, or in the heat and fury of the fray, it was still one thing—one and the same for ever—for himself he could not forget.

It was his pride only, his indomitable, immutable, impassive pride, which bore him, if not scatheless, yet unwrithing through the furnace of his recollections, his remorse.

What a life, what a career had been his! What promise had been wanting to his youth! what glory to his manhood! What field of fame, ay, and of infamy, had he not trodden with the bold foot of a resolute competitor, and left his footprints there, branded for ever ineffaceable.

Soldier, scholar, statesman, orator, poet, voluptuary, gambler, debauchee, traveler, pilgrim, pirate, such, in the heat and heyday of his blood, had been the characters in which, turn after turn, he figured in the world's changing phases; and to these, in his old age, add exile for conscience' sake, philosopher, self-torturer, half atheist, half bigot, an anchorite, and a devotee, yet unrepentant.

Such was the man who, amid that rage and uproar of the elements—meet symbol of his own tumultuous career—lay struggling between life and death; not willing to remain, yet loth to go; too weak to live, but still too strong to die.

And now, that his last hour was nigh at hand, he lay extended on the huge oaken bed, which stood in a recess of that high turret chamber, wherein he had passed all his nights, and many of his days, in utter solitudes, during the latter years of his long life.

There he lay, in full dress; looking rather, so far as concerned his attire, like a man about to get upon his horse prepared for a journey or a battle, than one who is on the eve of starting on the voyage over that shoreless sea whose waters are eternity.

Suddenly stricken down while walking on the castle terrace, by some strange and searching malady, which had smitten him suddenly, without note or warning, in the midst of his proud strength, he had commanded the men who took him up, to bear him to his chamber—that chamber, the scene of so much mysterious terror, which, save his own, and that of an old negro man who had followed him from climes beyond the western sea, and that of one other—more mysterious—being, no human foot had trod for above half a century.

And there he now lay, even as he had fallen; for,

with a strange sort of proud obstinacy, very characteristic of the man, he had refused positively to allow himself to be undressed, or to assume in any way the semblance of one sick unto death, although, at that very time, he was racked by agonies, both physical and moral, which would have defied the pen of Shakspeare to depict.

His doublet, therefore, of black velvet, was buttoned closely up, over his still broad and bulky chest, to his collar-bone, where the broad, unadorned bunch of his linen shirt was turned down squarely over the cape of the outer garment; for, although this was the age of flowing horse-hair periwigs, long-waisted, huge-cuffed, and no-collared coats; voluminous Steinkirke cravats rustling with Flemish lace, and all the hideous fashions of the eighteenth century, the old earl adhered obstinately—as he did to his religion and his loyalty—to the dress which he had worn in the days of the maiden queen and her immediate successors.

His loose trunk hose, of the same material as his doublet, were met at the knee by a pair of heavy polished riding-boots, mounted with gilt spurs, an article long ago disused; and these latter implements, with the basket-hilt of the long, ponderous rapier which he persisted in retaining, suspended from a broad shoulder-belt of black leather, were the only ornaments or gauds of any kind which glittered in his valuable but plain and dark apparel.

His face was deadly pale; and this pallor was rendered yet more observable by the whiteness of his long, curled hair, which fell down naturally below the collar of his doublet; by the heavy masses of his snow-white eyebrows, and the immense drooping mustaches which he wore on his upper lip.

His eyes glared fearfully; and these alone gave notice that he was yet alive, as they rolled observantly to and fro, noticing everything that passed within the chamber, although he spoke not, nor gave the slightest token that he was in possession of his senses.

He had not uttered a single groan since he had been laid on his bed, though it was evident that he was suffering exceeding pain, from the terrible changes which flitted over his face, and from the convulsive spasms, during which his teeth had bitten his nether lip so fiercely that the blood trickled down his snow-white beard.

It was on the morning previous to the day of the tempest, that he fell, as has been stated, in a sort of fit or convulsion, on the great terrace. When the servants, however, who had seen him fall, from a distance, came up to the spot, he had entirely recovered his senses and his self-possession—if, indeed, he had ever lost them—and although unable to rise, or even to lift a limb—for it appeared that all his person, save his right arm and his head, were paralyzed—he spoke in his usual slow, cold, sonorous tones, which never fell on any ear without leaving the impression that the speaker had survived every touch of human feeling, and that the affections

ness than the passions of the old man, were ashes, irrecoverably dead and dormant.

The orders which he gave were, as his orders were at all times, brief, stern, and to the point.

A courier was sent, with directions to spare neither cost nor labor, at the utmost speed of man and horse, to York; thence to summon a well-known and noted lawyer, telling him that more than life and death were on his speed. An aged man, who for years had been the earl's only visitor, and who was strenuously suspected by the household of being a Jesuit in disguise, was sent for from Scarborough, which was the nearest town, though in that day little superior to a fishing hamlet; and he—with a surgeon who had been called in without orders by the servants, and of whose presence the dying man had not taken the slightest notice—was alone, in the turret chamber, at the moment when this brief narrative of a strange scene commences.

Everything in the chamber, in the persons who occupied it, in the things which there fell out, were strange and unusual.

It was a lofty, square apartment, occupying the whole of the upper story of the tower in which it was placed; the winding staircase, which alone gave access to it, being carried up in a small external turret, and entering by a low, arched door in one angle. On three sides there were tall windows, overlooking the whole country, directed to three cardinal points of the compass; the northern wall being pierced by the arched recess in which stood the old earl's bed. In the angle facing the door by which you entered, a fire-place, evidently of structure comparatively recent, as viewed with reference to the structure of the castle, yawned under an elaborately wrought canopy of Italian marble, of the age probably of the elder James, in whose pacific and would-be learned reign, a taste for classical subjects and Italian decoration had become in some sort the rage.

Over this classic structure, which was singularly out of keeping with the other decorations of the Gothic room, with its clustered pillars, its ponderous mouldings, and intersecting groundwork of black oak; its hangings of embossed and gilded leather of Cordova, and its whole character and air, which were purely mediæval, there hung a picture, by the pencil of some great foreign master, of a woman of extraordinary beauty, though of a singularly striking and un-English style of loveliness.

It was a tall, fair girl, with eyes of the darkest hazel, and brows and eyelashes which might have put the hues of night itself to shame, so glossy and unmingled was their blackness; while her hair, which flowed down over her bare shoulders, far below her waist, was of the brightest and most glossy gold.

Under the frame of this oval-shaped portrait, a long, sheathless rapier was suspended; the blade of which was perfectly bright and burnished, except for a space of about three inches long from the

point upward, and another patch somewhat smaller in size midway between the point and hilt, which were encrusted with thick, black rust, that seemed to have been allowed intentionally to invade the polish of the weapon. Across this antique sword, there was festooned a tress of what would have been taken, at first sight, for floss silk; for no one could have imagined that human hair could have attained such a length—even if it could have been so soft, so silky, or of a hue so lustrous. Yet human hair it was, nearly five feet in length, and of the very shade which was represented in the portrait above.

But of this lovely, lustrous hair, above two-thirds had evidently been steeped in some dark viscous fluid; for it was clotted and almost black. Nor did it require a very practiced eye to discover that the fluid in which it had been steeped, was blood.

It was impossible to look upon that portrait, with the blood-rusted sword beneath, and the blood-stained hair so similar to that of the fair girl portrayed above, without being convinced that thereto was connected some strange tale of love, and crime, and vengeance. But, save the old earl's and his negro servant's, and one other's, of whom we shall hear anon, no eye had looked for years upon those dark mementos of the past, and no one who was now alive, or had been alive within the last half century, knew or ever suspected aught concerning the picture or its lovely original.

The other decorations of the room, like these, were strange and old, and many of them foreign; and almost all had reference to some scene far distant, some period but by that old man long forgotten. There were arms, armor, and weapons, of strange forms and devices; and even instruments of torture, spotted and stained with rust; and feathers of rare birds, and hides of savage beasts, and the scaly spoils of serpents. Human bones, too, were among the grisly ornaments of the walls; and a complete human skeleton standing erect in a niche, with more than a dozen skulls around it, as a phrenologist would quickly have discovered, of as many different tribes of Indians.

On the table, among books and parchments, and strange instruments, astronomical or astrological, and some believed at that time to pertain to art magic, stood a small portable furnace, with crucibles, retort, and glass matrasses; and half a dozen knives and daggers, of diverse national fabric, from the exquisitely finished Venetian stiletto, to the rude Kris of the barbarous Malay.

Above all, towered a superb crucifix of gold, more than four feet in height, with a polished human skull lying at its foot.

The surgeon, whose aid had been rejected by a significant and contemptuous gesture of the right hand—and who, indeed, had not been slow to discover that his aid was useless—was cowering in a large elbow chair over the embers of the fitfully blazing wood fire, which was half expiring on the hearth. He would have given five years of his life

to escape from the place, but still shame forbidden him to quit it, while life remained in the palsied frame of the old nobleman.

The other old man—who had been just introduced by the negro, to whom the earl had addressed some words, in an unknown and strangely sounding tongue, on receiving which he quitted the chamber hastily—was leaning over the bed, conversing earnestly with the sufferer in the Latin language.

The surgeon, as he sat by the fire, pricked his ears, and listened with all his soul; for, without understanding scholarly or fluently the tongue of the world conquerors, he had a smattering of medical dog-Latin, by aid of which he had contrived already to pick up a few disjointed hints of the dark conversation which was passing between those two old men—the youngest of whom, though he might have been the grandson of the other, had already far exceeded the ordinary age of men in these degenerate days.

And of so dark and awful a nature were those few hints, that the listener actually shuddered as he caught them. No form of crime or horror that can be imagined but was touched upon, though by whom, where, or when committed, he was not Latinist enough to discover. Murder, adultery, rape, torturing, nay, parricide, and incest were named familiarly and without comment, although it was evident to the listener that remorse was busy with the dying peer, though it was combatted by his indomitable pride, in spite the remonstrances of the priest—for such, indeed, he was—and his urgent exhortations to him, if he would yet save his soul alive, to make atonement.

At length, so terrified was the man at what he heard, and so little was his frame under the control of his own will, that he uttered a sort of smothered groan, and his teeth chattered in his head audibly.

The dying earl caught the sounds, and bade the priest raise his head from the pillow. That done, his glaring eyes fixed the listening caitiff, as he afterward described it, like the tawny gleam of an eagle's eye riveted on its destined prey.

"Ha! slave!" he almost shouted, "dost thou understand, a beastly, cringing slave like thee, the language of the Cæsars?"

The man feebly muttered an explanation, rather lessening than increasing the degree of his apprehension.

"Come hither. What if the fiend's name shakes thee? Hither—nearer! I say nearer! Dost think I would harm such a coward thing as thou art? Now, feel my pulse. How long have I to live?"

The surgeon, terrified almost out of his propriety, could hardly be forced into giving a direct answer to this strange query; but at length admitted that there were not many hours of life left to the aged sufferer.

"Hast any drugs that can keep me alive until daybreak?"

"Most noble, there be none that can do so," replied the surgeon.

"I cannot live, thou wouldst say, so long?"

"I fear it is impossible, most noble lord."

"Thou art a fool. I will live until then, I tell thee; and thou shalt tarry here to see it. Now, hark thee, in thine ear—dost speak or understand Greek?"

"Not one letter of it, noble sir."

"Look that thou *lie* not; for, by the Lord that liveth, better it were for thee to be thrust into those slow embers and broiled piecemeal, than to lie to me now. Wilt swear thou dost not understand it?"

"By all that is most holy."

"Swear, then; and thou, Ignatius, receive his oath. Swear by this formula that I will repeat to thee, never to divulge that which thou hast heard, or that which thou shalt hear, that which thou hast seen, or that which thou shalt see in this chamber, on pain of"—and he ran through a form of oath so awful, so inexpressibly appalling, blasphemous, and horrible, that the surgeon's lips grew ashy pale as he repeated the words after him; and when it was concluded, sank back in his chair half fainting.

It was a formula in use among the barbarous buccaners of the Caribbean seas, from whom, it is probable, that, in some of his strange, wild wanderings, the English earl had learned it. Of that oath it is told, that so frightful, even to the least credulous and most daring soul, are its obligations, that it has never yet been broken.

This done, scarcely condescending to look at the trembling wretch again who had taken it, the peer resumed his conversation in the tongue of Pericles and Plato, which they both spoke as fluently as though they had been born under the shadow of the Acropolis.

While they were yet conversing, the door of the chamber was again opened, and the old negro returned, ushering in a girl of about eighteen years of age, of the most extraordinary symmetry of frame and loveliness of feature; the only fault that could have been found with either, were that they were even too voluptuous in the character of their otherwise perfect feminine beauty.

This girl had been, it was known, for the last two years, an inmate of the earl's household, having been brought to the castle, by the black servant, after an absence of above a fortnight, whence no mortal knew; and from that time, she had been the companion of his leisure hours, and had been treated, in all respects, by his express command, as the mistress of the castle. The vast age of the earl set all suspicion of impropriety at defiance; yet none could conjecture who or what she was—save that she was a lady, as was evident from her every tone and gesture; and a lady of rare talent and accomplishment.

Owing to the vast length to which the earl's years had been protracted, and his having survived by above the ordinary period of a generation, all his cotemporaries, nothing was known of Lord Huntcliff's early history. It was not certain whether he had ever married, either at home or abroad; and



this alone was undoubtedly, that he had never been known to acknowledge any one as his child, his descendant, or his relative.

It was generally believed that, at his death, the title would become extinct. What would become of the vast estates, none ventured so much as to conjecture.

The lovely girl entered; and—although she had been in some degree prepared, by the old servitor, for the scene she was about to witness—was totally overcome by what she saw; for it was evident to her, at once, that the death of her benefactor was close at hand, and that, within an hour, the ties, whatever they had been between them, would be broken.

She threw herself upon the bed, and burst into a paroxysm of tears and sobbing; and when, at length, she mastered her composure sufficiently to converse with the old earl, they talked earnestly and long in that same unknown, semi-barbarous sounding tongue, which none present—not even the Jesuit, a man of rare intellect and cultivation—had ever heard before; the same in which he was wont to confer with the black servant, who probably knew more of his secrets than any other living creature.

At this moment, simultaneously, the same idea flashed on the minds of the surgeon and the priest. The priest had, indeed, seen the lady many times before, but before he had never seen the portrait. The surgeon never had seen either; and now, although the date on the picture indicated that it had been painted Anno Domini 1620, and it was 1702, it was evident to the eyes of both, that the portrait and the person was identical. The same strange contrast of bright golden hair, with dark brown eyes and jet black brows and lashes; the same almost unnatural redundancy of the luxuriant hair; the same *too* voluptuous character of beauty. Clearly, they were the same; and yet the picture must have been painted at least sixty years before the birth of the exquisite girl before them; and the sword, which would seem to have avenged the subject of the painting, bore the date 1600 inwrought in the traceries of the guard.

While these things were yet passing in their minds, a bustle was heard without; and immediately after, the arrival of the lawyer was announced, who had been fetched from York.

By this time, strange to say, the prediction of the surgeon, the man of science, had been frustrated; that of the earl, the man of iron will, accomplished. The day had broken, and the old man, though sinking fast, was yet alive, and in full possession of his faculties.

The lawyer entered.

"You received," said the earl, addressing him as soon as he was well within the room, "a letter two years since, directing you to find out and keep in view a certain individual. You have done so?"

"I have, my lord."

"Where is he now?"

"At St. Andemer, in France."

"His character and occupations?"

"Unchanged since the last report."

"He has still no suspicion of his rank or prospects?"

"None, my lord."

"Nor can account for the late changes in his favor?"

"Of late, he has made violent but vain efforts to discover that."

"Sit down. Open that casket; examine the documents—quickly, for I shall be dead within ten minutes."

In less than half that time, the lawyer had perused the papers, and looked up with an intelligent glance.

"Are they sufficient?"

"Perfectly satisfactory and sufficient."

"To establish legitimacy, and insure succession to both rank, title, and estates?"

"To establish all, my lord; but——." He paused.

"But what? Speak out—there is no time to lose."

"A declaration from your lips thus, in articulo mortis, would be a weighty confirmation."

"Hear, all men," cried the dying earl, in a clear, strong voice, "Ernest Fitzhardinge Huntcliff, known as Ernest Fitzhardinge, late of the French Irish Legion, now at St. Andemer, is the only and legitimate son of Ernest Alfred, second and sole surviving son of Ernest Fitzhardinge Alfred, only son of Fitzhardinge Huntcliff, my only and legitimate son by my wife Emma Adeline Fitzhardinge, married by me, at Paris, in 1608; and the said Ernest Fitzhardinge Huntcliff is my sole heir to all my properties, real and personal. Amen! This is my dying declaration."

He ceased; and the girl stooped down and kissed his brow, and whispered something in his ear.

He hesitated for a moment, drew her to his breast with his right arm, and kissed her fervently, but then replied, "No, no, Theresa; it is impossible."

Then she addressed him once more, very earnestly, in that unknown tongue; and he replied, as it seemed, affectionately, but firmly.

Then she knelt down by his side, and exclaimed aloud, in English, "In the name of the most Blessed Virgin and her ever-living Son, I adjure you, not for my sake, but for *hers*! I adjure you, father! father!"

But he repulsed her, angrily, and cried, "No, no, base girl! I tell you no! How dare you call me father? Silence—for shame! Let me die in peace!"

And he sunk back on his pillow; and lay there writhing, evidently in the death-struggle, with the girl sobbing by his pillow, and all the bystanders looking on in mute consternation.

Suddenly, when he appeared speechless and all but dead, a wilder gust of wind roared round the turret, and a huge volume of black smoke rushed down the chimney and filled all that end of the room with a dense, murky cloud.

At that instant, with horror depicted in every

struggling lineament, the dying man wrestled himself up, and sat erect, with his arms outstretched towards the picture.

"My God!" he cried; "my God! she is alive! she is coming down! Inez! Inez! Help! help! hold her; she will strike me!"

At that strange cry, every eye was turned toward the picture; but the thick volume still pouring out from the chimney, covered it with a veil perfectly impervious!

"Hold, Inez! hold, Inez!" shrieked the hoary sinner. "I will confess, only do not, do not *thou* strike me. Ignatius, mark me: Inez Castrejon was my wife also, wedded at Madrid. This, this, Theresa Huntcliff, is her grandchild. In the casket marked to be burnt unopened, all the documents are preserved. Inez, your will is done. Have I atoned? Have I——no! no! she frowns; she lifts the sword;

she—she—oh!"—he uttered a wild shriek—"in the heart! in the heart!—alas!—Inez——"

He fell back on the pillow—he was dead.

The smoke cleared away, and there stood the picture, calm, firm, and motionless as ever. But, strange to say, though none observed it at the time, when search was made thereafter, the blood-rusted sword and the blood-stained tress of hair had vanished.

Conscience had done its work, even in the parting hour; and pride, by its terrible enforcement, had let go its hold on its last fatal secret.

Strange things were disclosed on the openings of those caskets, which we may, perchance, relate hereafter; but the recognition of his lovely granddaughter, was the last involuntary act of the earl's death-bed.

# THE ELOPEMENT.

Lee, Henry G

*Godsey's Lady's Book (1848-1854)*; Feb 1850; American Periodicals

pg. 90B



THE ELOPEMENT.

# THE ELOPEMENT.

BY HENRY G. LEE.

(See Plate.)

"Young man, it is useless to urge this matter. In declining your offer of an alliance with my family, I am in earnest."

"I am not content with a simple rejection of my suit, Mr. Carlton. I give reasons for my own conduct, and like to have reasons for all acts affecting myself. Will you say why I am not deemed worthy to claim the hand of one whose heart I already possess? Is not my family as good as yours?"

The young man spoke eagerly, while his brows were knit and his eyes firmly fixed on those of the person he addressed.

"William," said Mr. Carlton, manifesting a good deal of excitement as he spoke, "I do not recognize your right to demand of me reasons for my conduct. I will say, however, that the happiness of my child is in my keeping as a natural right, and I am bound to protect her in every possible way. I regard only her happiness when I decline the offer made for her hand. I know the heart of Jessie well, and know that, if committed to your keeping, it will be a broken heart in less than five years—it may be in less than one."

"I love your daughter, Mr. Carlton," replied the young man to this. "Why should I break the heart of one I love?"

"William Levering, such love as yours falls upon the heart as a blight, not a blessing. I know you well, your principles and your life—both are bad."

A red spot burned on the young man's cheek, and his eyes flashed. But Mr. Carlton looked calmly at him.

"Think," he added; "picture to yourself one of your companions in vice approaching your own sister, and offering the love of his corrupt heart. Would you not step between, abandoned as you are, and risk your very life, rather than permit the sacrifice?"

"Mr. Carlton," said Levering, "I cannot permit this, nor any one else, to insult and outrage me in this way."

"As you like," returned the other, coldly. "You ask reasons for my conduct, but are not willing to hear them."

For a short time, there was silence, the young man standing in an attitude of irresolution. Then muttering something in an under tone, he retired from the presence of Mr. Carlton.

A few hours afterwards, a servant tapped softly at the chamber door of Miss Carlton, the young lady referred to in the brief conversation just given.

"What do you want, Philip?" asked Jessie, as she opened the door.

The servant slipped a sealed note into her hand, with an air of secrecy, and then retired.

Quickly re-entering her room, and turning the key, Jessie broke the envelop of the billet she had received, and read what was written within. The communication was from her lover.

"I have seen your father," said he, "as you so earnestly desired, and the result of the interview is just what I expected. He was not content with an angry denial of my suit, but throw me off with smarting insult. He says I cannot make you happy. Heaven knows how ardently I desire to fill your cup with joy, even until it overrun the brim. If the passionate love of a sincere heart can make you happy, Jessie, then your whole life will be blessed. I cannot imagine the ground of his dislike towards me. I have never injured him nor his. This opposition on his part makes me wretched. Are we, then, to remain ever separate? or will you leave all, and throw yourself into my arms? I shall await your answer to this in the wildest impatience. When you have made up your mind, place your answer in the hands of Philip. He will keep our secret inviolate; for he is under obligations to me of the strongest character."

"My heart is wholly yours," wrote Jessie, in reply.

"Shall heart and person longer be separated?" answered Levering. "To-morrow week, I hear, your father will leave home, to be gone several days. This I learn from Philip. What better opportunity to pass from his protection to mine?"

Two days elapsed, and then the maiden wrote—"Let it be as you desire."

Weak and foolish maiden! In that decision, how

much was involved! Not the happiness of a day or a year, but, it might be, of a whole lifetime.

What Mr. Carlton had said to Levering of his principles and his life was true. Both were bad, and very bad. He did not truly love Jessie, for of that he was incapable. No man who lacks virtue *can* love a woman truly. It is a moral impossibility.

Levering had first turned his thoughts to marriage because it was necessary, as he said to himself, to form such an alliance. He belonged to a wealthy family, and, by marrying into a family of equal wealth and standing, he would take proper care of the future. Of course, he must have a beautiful and accomplished wife. In looking around him, no one struck the young man's fancy so strongly as Jessie Carlton; and, after weighing all in favor and against an alliance with her family, decided to storm the citadel of her heart. Handsome, intelligent, and with a good address, he was not long in making the impression he desired. Jessie Carlton's young heart was quickly won.

Philip, a servant in the family of Mr. Carlton, whom Levering had secured to his interest, was informed of the intended elopement, and employed to give such aid as his position would afford. Of course, the utmost secrecy was enjoined upon him; and his faithfulness was sought to be secured by threats as well as promises. But Philip found it hard to bear up alone under a secret of such great importance; he wanted some one to share with him the heavy burden. So, confiding in the discretion of another servant in the house, a female, he divulged to her, after first obtaining her promise not to betray what he was about to communicate, the fact of Jessie's intended flight.

On the night previous to the day on which Mr. Carlton was to leave home, he sat up late, engaged in writing. It was past eleven o'clock, when there was a light tap at his door, which was opened immediately, and a female servant glided in noiselessly, closing softly the door after her.

"Well, Hannah?" said he, in a voice of inquiry, as she approached him, in a somewhat agitated manner.

Hannah sank into a chair, so much disturbed, that it was some moments before she could speak.

"Mr. Carlton," she at length said, "oh, I have something dreadful to tell you."

"For Heaven's sake, Hannah, speak out quickly, then. What has happened?" exclaimed Mr. Carlton, agitated in turn.

"Nothing has happened yet; but, if you go away to-morrow, it will happen. Oh, sir, do not go away."

"Hannah, what is the meaning of this? Speak out plainly at once."

"Miss Jessie——"

"Jessie! What of her?"

"She is going off with Mr. Levering."

"When? Where is she?" The father was on his feet, and moving towards the door. "Speak, girl!"

"Oh, sir, don't be frightened," said Hannah; "it isn't to-night. Miss Jessie is in her room. I have only come to tell you about it in time."

"Ah! thank you, my faithful Hannah."

Mr. Carlton spoke in a calmer voice; and, returning to the secretary where he had been writing, sat down again.

"Now," he added, "tell me all you know about this matter."

"All I know," replied Hannah, "I got to-day from Philip. He told me that he has been carrying letters from Mr. Levering to Jessie and back again, for some time, and that it is all arranged for her to go off with him, just at daylight, the morning after you leave home."

"Can it be possible? Mad girl!" exclaimed Mr. Carlton, passionately. "And you are sure of all this, Hannah?"

"Philip told me, and I'm afraid it is all true."

"Very well, Hannah. I thank you from my heart for this act of duty. You have saved Jessie, it may be, from a lifetime of misery. Mr. Levering is a bad man, and if she marries him, he will make her wretched. Foolish, foolish girl! Could she not believe her father?"

After some further conference, the girl left the room; and Mr. Carlton, closing his secretary, walked the floor for the space of an hour ere retiring. On the next day, greatly to the surprise of Hannah, he left home at the time previously appointed.

No sleep weighed down the eyelids of Jessie Carlton during the night that succeeded. Through the long hours that intervened from the time the family retired until the hand of Aurora gently raised the curtain of darkness from the east, she either walked the floor of her chamber or lay wakeful upon the bed. At the early dawn, she was to pass from beneath her father's roof and from under his protection, committing unto another her destiny. Well might her heart tremble and grow faint as she tried to look into the dark future; well might she shrink back, half repentant, and hesitate about the step she had resolved to take. The silent midnight gives to the wakeful solemn thoughts. Such thoughts came to Jessie; and, as the winds sighed through the trees or moaned beneath the caves, it seemed as if a spirit were addressing her in tones of warning.

At last, a feeble line of light was seen upon the horizon; and it gradually widened until the dawn appeared. Hurriedly throwing a shawl around her, Jessie stood for some minutes near the window, as if awaiting an expectant signal. Presently, a hand was laid upon the lock. Silently crossing the room, she opened the door. Philip stood there with his finger on his lip.

"Is all right?" asked Jessie, in a low, agitated whisper.

"All is right," returned the man. "Be quick; he is waiting for you."

Gliding through the door, Jessie went noiselessly down stairs. As she passed into the open air, Lev-

ering received her, handing, as he did so, a purse of money to the treacherous servant as his promised reward.

A few minutes prior to this, a scene even more exciting took place a short distance from the mansion of Mr. Carlton, where a carriage stood in waiting for the fugitive. The driver had left his box, and was standing near his horses, when, suddenly, a man was by his side, pistol in hand, uttering, in a low, peremptory voice, "Silence, and you are safe!"

The driver started back a few paces in alarm; while the stranger who had presented his weapon, kept it directed towards him.

"Now leave these grounds as quickly as you can go," said the intruder.

The driver hesitated, when the sharp click of the pistol-lock was heard.

"Go, instantly!" repeated the man. "Your horses and carriage are safe. You will find them at the Stag and Hound in an hour from this. Now go, if you set the value of a hair upon your life."

The driver, by this time thoroughly alarmed, fled. As soon as he had left the ground, the stranger mounted the box and grasped the reins. Hardly had he taken his place, ere Levering and Jessie appeared, and hurriedly entered the carriage.

"Where did you say I must drive?" inquired the man, leaning over from the box.

"To Mr. Liston's. And see that no grass grows beneath your horses' feet."

The man spoke sharply to the spirited animals, and away they dashed at full speed. Liston was a minister, who had been engaged to perform the marriage service for Levering and Jessie. He lived in the town which lay a short distance from the beautiful country residence of Mr. Carlton. In a few minutes, the horses were reined up at the dwelling of the minister, when Levering sprang from the carriage; and lifting Jessie, as she attempted to descend, actually bore her in his arms across the pavement and into the house. Just as the fugitives disappeared, another vehicle drove up at a rapid pace. The self-constituted driver of Levering's carriage left his own horses, and hurrying to the door of the second carriage, spoke rapidly a few words to some one within; and then turning away, entered the minister's house, and throwing off his rough hat and coat in the hall, presented the figure of a well-dressed gentleman. For a few moments, he stood, as if awaiting some one, while his ear was bent towards the door of a room that opened from the passage, to hear what was going on within. Then he placed his hand on this door, and gently pushing it open, entered. The young couple were already on the floor; and the minister, in his robes, stood before them, ready to begin the ceremony. So softly had the stranger entered, that no one perceived his presence but the minister, who did not permit the intrusion to interfere with what he was doing. He began, and progressed until he came to that part

of the ceremony in which it is demanded of those present to show cause why the parties about to be joined in holy wedlock cannot lawfully enter that state, when the door of the room was thrown suddenly open, and a woman rushed in, exclaiming, "I forbid the bans!"

"Who are you, and by what right do you forbid them?" inquired the minister, in an agitated voice.

Levering and Jessie started at this unexpected interruption; and, turning, looked in astonishment both at the woman and the man.

"Miss Carlton," said the woman, coming up to Jessie and grasping her arm, "you have no right to this man; he belongs to me by a prior claim, that I will not see canceled. There is your natural protector"—and she drew her, with a sudden jerk, across the room towards the man who had entered just before her—"your father. And, in Heaven's name, let not a man like this tempt you thus madly from his side again!"

Jessie scarcely heard the closing words of the sentence. Overcome by so dreadful a termination of her elopement, she sank into the arms of her father—for it was he who had driven her to the minister's.

Before the vile companion of his unbridled hours, Levering stood, for a few moments, covered with shame and confusion.

"Now go, young man," said Mr. Carlton, sternly, as he supported the form of his child; "go with this frail, unhappy creature, whom you have reduced from virtue to a level with yourself. Go, consort with her as your equal; but dream not again of an alliance with the pure being I have saved from your unhallowed grasp. She can never be yours. If, before, you could deceive her into the belief that you were an angel of light, the power of deception is now gone, for you stand before her in all your native corruption and deformity. Go, sir!"

Confounded by a denouement so painful and humiliating, Levering, as soon as he could collect his bewildered senses, sprung from the room. As he gained the open air, the driver who had been so suddenly deprived of his carriage, came up. Levering hurriedly entered the vehicle, exclaiming—"Drive me home!"

The man needed not a second invitation to mount his box. Quick as thought, he had the reins in his hands, and the horses were soon springing before him at a gallop.

The reader doubtless understands all this without further explanation; and Levering had but few inquiries to make ere he comprehended the whole affair to more than his entire satisfaction. As for Jessie, she, too, understood enough to make her heart sink in her bosom and tremble, whenever she thought of the narrow escape she had made from an alliance that could only have produced wretchedness, if it would not have borne her down to the grave, in a few short years, with a broken heart.

## THE MYSTERIOUS SINGER.\*

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

It was late in the afternoon of a day in January, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, that a number of idlers might have been seen collected about the harbor at the mouth of the Vistula, where a Swedish brigantine had just arrived, among other vessels. As she approached the wharf, the uninteresting faces of a thin sprinkling of passengers were discernible in the light of the lamps or the misty shadow of deepening twilight. Here and there was a haughty-looking Swede, with a muffled Pole or two; there were Polish Jews in their peculiar dress, and Dantzic merchants; but the faces of all wore an expression of eagerness to quit the vessel in time to avail themselves of the different conveyances to the city. The bustle and confusion of their landing, the getting out of their luggage, and the exchange of salutations and news between them and the people on the dock, having at length subsided, the crowd gradually dispersed. The idlers took their way homeward; and as a stream of light from the light-house flung its broad glare upon the bosom of the waters, and the snow began to fall thickly, the shore was almost entirely deserted.

Here and there, however, a solitary wanderer might be seen slowly passing; and among those who were, perhaps, belated, one lingered on the wharf, of tall and rather imposing figure, closely wrapped in a mantle, and walking to and fro with the air of a person disappointed in the expectation of seeing some one. It was not long before his attention was fixed by observing the owner of the Swedish vessel lead forth a female, whom he assisted to land, and with whom he was presently engaged in a dispute. The stranger drew as near as he could without observation, attracted by the tones of a richly musical voice, to which the mournful earnestness of the speaker gave singular effect. As well as he could discover, the woman was tall and slender, and the voice was evidently that of youth.

The rough tones of the shipmaster suddenly rose so high, that his words could be distinctly heard.

"A strange story enough!" he cried, sneeringly. "If your money was stolen from you on board my vessel, you should have let me known it before the passengers had gone ashore, that search might have been made. But you say nothing till the passage money is called for! I ask your pardon, madam, but I cannot believe a word of it!"

"I will give you all I possess!" pleaded the soft voice, which was broken by low sobs. "My purse is gone, but here is the bundle of clothes; they may perhaps, be worth what I owe you. Only, I beseech you, make no noise about the matter; it was to avoid that, I waited till all the passengers were gone."

"The surer sign you are an impostor!" answered the man, rudely. "If you had really been robbed, you would have made noise enough about it. I have been suspicious of you since you came on board at Narva, for you seemed like a woman who had something on her conscience. Now that you cannot pay what you owe, it is good reason why you should be given in charge to the bailiff, or taken before the burgomaster of Dantzic."

"Oh, spare me, spare me!" cried the female, in a tone of agonized entreaty, turning so that in the dim light her pale face could be imperfectly seen. "Take all I have—take even these papers!"—and she drew a bundle of folded letters from her bosom. "Take or send these to the Countess Aurora, of Koningsmark, at Quedlinburg, or wherever she may be; she will give you gold for the letters—more, much more than all your passengers together have paid you!"

The man shook his head. "You only increase my suspicions, fair lady," said he. "Who will assure me that these letters are worth what you say? And you bid me take them to a countess, the favorite of the King of Poland, who is the enemy of the king I serve. Appearances are against you; you are in my power; and be certain, I shall not let you go till you have given a proper account of yourself."

The unhappy woman sank upon her knees, and stretched out her hands in the energy of supplication and despair. Before she could speak, heavy steps approached.

"Base Swede!" exclaimed the deep voice of the stranger, "how darest thou maltreat a lady! Give back the bundle, and let her go, or, by this light! the sword of an officer of the army of the empire shall print in thy flesh some of the marks it has made in French and Turkish carcases!"

Startled by the martial air and threatening language of this unexpected champion, the Swede retreated a pace or two, and answered, in a deferential tone—

"I am ready to give up the lady's property, sir, as soon as I receive the sum due for her passage."

"And how much is that?"

"Six Swedish dollars."

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\* An historical novel, by Ludwig Storch, contains many incidents of the following tale. They have been, however, altered and modified to a moral purpose, as well as to bring the story within limits.

"A paltry sum, in truth, to vex a lady about," grumbled the stranger, while he drew a roll from his pocket, and counted out the money into the man's hand, taking from him the clothes and papers belonging to his fair passenger. Then offering her his arm, he led the way from the wharf, now covered with snow, to one of the public houses not far distant; where, on entering, he ordered supper, and then conducted his companion to a private apartment, lighted and warmed by a cheerful fire.

Her first expressions of gratitude had been choked by sobs; but her tears were dried at the language of encouragement. When her mantle and hood were removed, her protector was almost startled at the beauty that met his gaze. Though not in the first bloom of youth—for she appeared about seven or eight and twenty—the noble yet delicate outline of her features, the lofty, intellectual forehead, the clear paleness of her complexion, and her soft, dark eyes, fringed with long lashes, with an indescribable sweetness of expression about the small mouth, gave her claims to the highest order of loveliness; while the carriage of her tall and symmetrical figure, and the grace of every movement, marked her as one accustomed to an elevated sphere of life. The deep melancholy expressed in her face, and in the tones of her strangely melodious voice, gave still more of interest to her beauty, while it tempered with respect the feeling of admiration which the beholder might otherwise have taken no pains to conceal.

Having rendered her all necessary assistance in uncloaking and disposing of the articles brought from the vessel, he conducted her to the room where supper was prepared. It was not till their return from the meal, that he ventured to ask the name by which he should address her.

The only reply to this question was a burst of tears. Feeling for the mortification he supposed her late misfortune and its vexatious consequences had caused, the stranger begged her to be composed, and offered himself to take any message she might wish to send to her friends or relatives.

"I have no relatives, no friends," she answered, still weeping. "I cannot even give you my name."

Her protector looked surprised and embarrassed.

"You are happy, sir," said the lady, more calmly, "never to have experienced what it is to have all the ties broken which link one to home and family."

"Nay, that I have," replied her companion. "Those things, I assure you, are trifles; the greatest evil lies in our imagination. And this seems the case with you, madam. You have been robbed of your present means, but you have elsewhere——"

"Nothing; I am penniless, and an outcast. I know not where to go; despair has driven me thus far. It is like a dream before me, that I meant to seek the Countess of Koningsmark; and if she repelled me——"

"Have you no certainty, then, of being graciously received by her?"

"Alas! I have too much reason to fear the contrary."

"A bad prospect," said the stranger, musingly.

After a pause, as if struck with a new thought, he continued: "Permit me, madam, to offer a word of counsel. The world, I see, has dealt hardly with you; but you have yet a property it cannot touch—a noble capital, which may yield a splendid interest. With such a figure and face, with such a voice, you may be at all times independent."

The lady looked at him bewildered.

"Your fate and mine," he proceeded, "exhibit a strange similarity. I, too, am without friends, except those who love my genius. I am an actor; I have found independence and happiness in my profession. Why should not you, who are so fitted to adorn it?"

The lady appeared startled, but not appalled.

"An actress?" she murmured.

"Why not? The profession has many advantages. The world may scorn us; but we can return the scorn, reveling in the delights of an artist-life, and winning the wealth which the world most values. You, madam, as you say, are alone, forsaken, and destitute, having not even a name; you have passed already the gulf that divides us from the favorites of fortune; you have already tasted all the bitterness of our condition. Why refuse the sweets of the cup?"

A few moments of silence ensued.

"But in what theatre could I appear?" asked the fair stranger.

"Leave that to me, lady, if you do but consent. There is a company in Dantzic, under the direction of Master Kunst. I am now on my way to visit him, for the purpose of engaging myself to him; and if you will go with me, we will make common cause. You may pass for my sister, daughter, or niece, if you please; and as an actress, bear the name of Chloris, or Helen, or Isolinda, or whatever you like."

"I will consider of your proposal," answered the lady.

But she listened earnestly to her companion's arguments in favor of his profession; and the evening was not ended, when she signified her consent to join the theatrical company.

"You may call me Mademoiselle Schelling," said she; "and I will be known to the public as Chloris."

The stranger expressed his delight at her acceptance of his proposition.

"Tis time now," said he, "that you knew my name: it is Feigenspan, or Amyntas, as I am called in the theatre. Let us drink a cup of wine to our better acquaintance. I have but a plain name, yet it is quite at your service, madam"—with a low bow. "Perhaps, in time, I may persuade you to accept it."

"Sir," said the lady, gravely, "I owe you deep gratitude for your services, but must entreat you to



respect the grief of one who is the most wretched of her sex."

Her voice was interrupted by tears; and the actor hastened to assure her that he would never again venture to transgress. Then, having bespoken the attendance of a maid, he bade her good night, and retired to dream of his own prospects.

The actor was received, the next day, with courtesy by the manager of the company to whom he went to offer his services in tragedy or comedy; having talents, in his own opinion, which fitted him for either one or the other. Unfortunately, however, his fame had gone before him; and the world, having had some experience of his performances, had already voted him a player of inferior quality. His habit, off the stage, of assuming the air of a hero or a noble—being known for the son of an honest hardware merchant—had considerably lessened the general confidence in his pretensions. He found it impossible to impress Master Kunst with so high an opinion of his abilities as to procure an engagement; but when he mentioned that he had with him a young lady, his niece, whose rare talents and beauty would insure success, notwithstanding her want of experience in the profession, the manager's countenance changed. When particular inquiries had satisfied him that she was, in truth, a prize worth securing, and her services were offered at a moderate price, with the indispensable condition only that Feigenspan also should be engaged, Kunst expressed a desire to see her, and hear her recite and sing. The actor returned to the lodging where he had left Mademoiselle Schelling—as she chose for the time to be called—and gave her some instructions needful for the life on which she was entering. She assented to every arrangement made for her, and went with him to be introduced to the manager. His practiced eye discerned at once the effect her singular beauty and grace were likely to produce; and his respectful and cordial manner re-assured her. After some conversation, she repeated some passages, at his request, from a German tragic poet, and sang an air or two, in a voice which, for clearness, melody, and thrilling pathos, he had never heard surpassed. Delighted with his acquisition, he proffered at once favorable terms for a three months' engagement. Feigenspan was also engaged, as he refused to permit his relative to remain without him—a journey to Königsberg being the alternative. He demanded a sum in advance, for the purchase of sundry articles necessary to a female stage wardrobe, which was paid down by Kunst; and the fair Chloris was conducted to lodgings in the vicinity of the theatre.

The tradition is yet familiar in Dantzic, of the impression produced upon the theatre-loving public by the first appearance of a new singer, known as "the beautiful Chloris," and lauded in the journals of the time as an artiste of the first rank. With each performance, she seemed to rise in popular

favor; and ere a month had elapsed, it was so much "the rage" to see, to admire, and to extol the fair creature who had risen a brilliant star in the dramatic horizon, that no piece would be listened to with patience in which she did not appear. All believed her to be the niece of Feigenspan, who was treated, on her account, with a deference and attention his abilities had never commanded, notwithstanding his sublime pretensions. Already had he been more than repaid for the aid rendered the night of her landing; yet she seemed still to regard him as a benefactor.

Another month of triumph and success passed; and Chloris, in the new world of music and ideal beauty that opened before her, seemed almost to forget her past sufferings. From public applause she shrank tremblingly; but the consciousness that admiration and homage surrounded her, that her voice had the power of a spell over the hearts of all who listened, that her presence moved the sympathies of thousands, was not without its charm. She thought not of the danger to her peace that lurked beneath the brilliant flower of her renown; she dreamed not that the art she was beginning to love, which had shed lustre on her darkened life, had placed her in the view of men, and that she must bid adieu henceforth to the quiet and seclusion she had craved as the reward of her toils.

A distinguished-looking foreigner called one day upon the manager, and announced himself as Colonel Menschikoff, in the service of his majesty the czar of Russia. His majesty had long wished to have a German theatrical company in Moscow: a German engineer had told him much of the players in Dantzic, and he had sent to invite them to his capital. Offers of remuneration were made, the liberality of which exceeded Kunst's most daring hopes; and, dazzled by the prospects opened to him, he promised to consult the members of his company. These were found willing enough, for the novelty of the enterprise gave it charms; but to the surprise of all, Chloris, who had always quietly assented to every measure proposed, refused to go. The Russian officer informed the manager, in confidence, that his object was chiefly to secure her services; and both essayed with her the power of persuasion, doubling the offer of compensation—but in vain. She seemed to shudder at the very name of Russia. They turned, in despair of prevailing, to Feigenspan; and he begged to be left for a few moments alone with his niece, to whom he said he would offer irresistible arguments to induce her compliance. The actor knew how to work the springs of a generous nature. He painted in exaggerated colors the services he had rendered her; the pains he had taken to build up her fortunes; his own brilliant prospects and hopes of advancement, which would all be blighted by her refusal to comply with the czar's wish. He appealed to her gratitude, and besought her not to destroy his prospects and doom him to the obscurity out of which he had begun to rise. Again, as he saw her hesitate, he reproached her with ingrati-

inde; and that was more than the tender heart of Chloris could bear.

"No, no!" she cried, weeping; "I may be, must be miserable, but never ungrateful! You shall not suffer loss through me; and if the worst comes, then death shall——"

Her voice faltered; but she presently recovered herself.

"I will go to Moscow," she added, resolutely, "but on one condition."

"What is that?" asked Feigenspan, overjoyed at her consent.

"You have called me your niece; and none here doubt that I am so," said the lady. "My condition is, that in Moscow you assert everywhere that I am so—that I am the child of your dead sister, known by you since childhood; and that I have been with you for the last three years. You are to insist upon this in the face of every circumstance that may occur to make you deny our relationship."

"That I will," cried the actor, right willingly."

And he hastened with the news of his success to the manager, who presently signified to Menschikoff his acceptance of the czar's gracious invitation.

In due time, the company was established in Moscow. They were received on their journey with cold inhospitality by the inhabitants of the country, who regarded them almost with superstitious dread, as ministers to unhallowed pleasure, by which the czar was striving to corrupt his people; but in the capital, a welcome awaited them. The agitation and melancholy of Chloris preyed on her health, and a severe illness rendered her unable for weeks to take part in the performances. She prayed to die; but her strength returned, and it was at length announced that the celebrated singer would appear. The public were on the tiptoe of expectation, and the theatre was crowded with the noble and the gay. When she came upon the stage, the murmur that broke for an instant upon the breathless hush of expectation, was a tribute to her dazzling beauty; when her voice rose, filling the house with its rich melody, the very hearts of the audience stood still; and when she ceased, the immense building shook with the loud and repeated thunders of applause. Never had an artiste of such power appeared on those boards; never had those walls resounded to such peals of acclamation.

The opera was over. Chloris, pursued by the shouts of thousands, had quitted the theatre, leaning on the arm of Feigenspan; had entered her carriage, and returned to her dwelling. She had flung the wreath from her forehead, and unbound her long hair; but the gems still glittered on her arms and bosom, as if in mockery of the sadness no triumph could efface from her brow.

There was a loud knock at the door of the house, in the lower apartments of which lodged Amyntas and another of the company. The door was opened, and two men, wrapped in cloaks, were seen without.

"What would you?" asked the actor.

"Silence," said one of the men, "and let us pass within. We come to thank the fair Chloris for the enjoyment of the evening."

"My niece receives no visitors, especially at this hour," was the reply.

A muttered execration, in Russian, broke from the lips of the person who had not spoken.

"Let us pass. I am Menschikoff," said the other, impatiently.

"You cannot, whoever——"

A violent thrust, which sent him to the floor at some paces distance, interrupted his speech; and the two strangers entered unceremoniously.

A knock, somewhat less imperative, was presently heard at the door of the singer's apartment, and the voice of Menschikoff, requesting admittance.

"I am sent by his majesty. I must speak with you," he said.

"I can receive no visits. I am exhausted, ill!" pleaded Chloris.

"On pain of his majesty's anger, I must speak with you," persisted the colonel.

The actress made no reply. The intruders essayed the door, and its slight fastenings at once gave way. Chloris uttered a faint shriek, and covered her face with her hands.

"I crave pardon, fair lady," cried the officer, "that I have been driven to this violence to obtain access to your presence. It is not common for those gifted as you are, to seclude themselves thus from the grateful homage due to genius."

"And must I bear this, too?" murmured the singer, in a low tone of anguish.

"You will learn our customs better," said Menschikoff. "Permit me now to present to you this young soldier, my friend, who is eager to express to you the profound admiration with which your performance has inspired him. Not being versed in your language, fairest lady, he bids me interpret to you his feelings and his thanks."

The stranger approached boldly, and fixed his eyes on the beautiful face of the singer, who regarded him with a wild look of terror, while she trembled violently, and strove in vain to speak. Just then, voices were heard below; and muttering a few words in Russian, the stranger motioned Colonel Menschikoff to go down. Chloris had felt even his presence a protection; and she trembled still more when his companion again drew near.

"Listen to me," he said, in broken German; "I love you——"

"Have mercy upon me, your majesty! have mercy upon a feeble, helpless woman!" she exclaimed, in the Russian language; and falling at his feet, extended her arms with a gesture of supplication.

"Ha! a Russian! and you know me!" cried Peter.

"To whom but the czar would Colonel Menschikoff speak thus?"

"Who are you?" asked the monarch. "The Russian tongue is familiar to you; your looks, your

air, your manner, your speech, bespeak you above your condition. No mere singer would thus shudder and shrink from royal homage. Declare who you are, and be sure of worthy treatment at the hands of the czar; but do not dare to deceive me!"

"Sire, I am a woman!" answered Chloris, who, with a struggle, had recovered her self-possession. "I claim your protection by that name alone, and by the sacred right of misfortune—for sorrow has a power beyond the power of kings! I claim it as the most unhappy of my sex in all your broad empire!"

"I pledge it to you," said Peter, deeply moved. "But may I not be the confidant of these sorrows? Has the sovereign of Russia no power to relieve, to banish them? Trust me, and I will aid you."

"No sovereign on earth can aid me," answered the singer, mournfully. "I pray your majesty to receive my thanks; but the secret of my sorrow I will bear with me to the grave."

"Strange being!" exclaimed the monarch, gazing upon her in astonishment. Then extending his hand, which she reverently kissed, he sighed and withdrew, taking with him his favorite Menschikoff, who had remained in the room below.

From this time, though the czar took no public notice of the actress, the opinion was generally current that she stood high in his favor; and this rumor kept all at a distance who might otherwise have intruded their attentions. She was glad of this exemption from the homage usually paid to those of her profession, and grateful for the protection she found so efficient. Matters thus went on, while the more serious business of war with Sweden occupied the monarch's attention, and gave employment to his ministers. The battles and victories that succeeded, form a striking page in history, but belong not to this simple tale.

Again, when all Moscow was alive with rejoicing for a splendid victory, the royal favorite, Menschikoff—then advanced to the rank of general—sought the abode of the singer. This time, it was to solicit a favor. Among the Swedish prisoners, who had become his property by law, to be bought and sold at his pleasure, was a young girl, the servant of a provost in Marienburg, who also was taken captive when the city was destroyed. The account given by the provost of the maiden's rare gifts, induced Menschikoff to desire the cultivation of her powers. And what tutor could perform the task so well as the accomplished Chloris? To her care he wished to intrust the girl, and promised to reward liberally the pains bestowed on her education.

The singer professed herself flattered by the confidence of the lord general, and ready to undertake the charge. The maiden was brought to her the same day. She was sixteen. Her graceful form, her face of innocent beauty, her childlike confidence in her instructress, won the heart of Chloris at once, and she felt that she had at last found a friend.

The public joy for military triumphs found vent in celebrations of various kinds. One of these was

the production of a new opera, at which the czar and his nobles—among whom were many who had gained new honors in the field—were present. Every tongue spoke the praises of the fair Chloris, and all eyes were upon her as she appeared in the principal part of the piece, and was welcomed by the enthusiastic applause of the audience. She bowed gracefully in acknowledgment; and moving forward, began the air that commenced her part. Suddenly a young man, about twenty, who wore the white satin dress of the imperial rhyms or pages, sprang to his feet with a cry of surprise. A scarlet flush mounted to his brow; and eagerly turning to his companions, he cried, in incoherent accents—

"That woman—the singer—who is she? whence came she?"

His comrades smiled.

"Your passion is a sudden one," said an officer; "but 'twill be useless. The actress is the proudest of women, and a special favorite with his majesty."

"Who—who is she?"

"The niece of a German actor, imported some months since from Dantzic."

"How strange a likeness!" murmured the page, and sank back in his seat. For the rest of the evening, his eyes were not removed from the face of the singer.

While the hours of Chloris had been given to the instruction of her young and lovely charge in various studies and accomplishments—for which she received liberal praises from the delighted Menschikoff—her reputed uncle, Feigenspan, had indulged his boastful spirit in such wise as to arouse suspicion that neither were what they seemed. He represented himself as having been a soldier of the empire, and talked of his martial deeds. Nor, when one imposture was detected, did he shame to invent another. He gave mysterious hints that his niece was a distinguished lady of Hanover, whom it pleased for a time to lay aside the rank to which her birth entitled her; and when his potations had been liberal, talked in such a manner to the eager auditors who gathered round him, as to cause the circulation of various wild and improbable rumors.

It was on the day after the performance of the new opera, that, having drunk too freely, he presented himself at the singer's door, accompanied by an officer, and, as usual, was admitted, though it was the hour for the lessons of her pupil Catherine. Chloris was startled at this abrupt introduction of a stranger, but rose with dignity as the two entered.

"Permit me to present my friend," stammered the actor. "Your name, comrade?"

"Baron von Hohenstein," said the visitor, fixing his eyes on the actress; who, though she was discomposed at the first glance, quickly recovered herself. "I had the honor to command a regiment of cuirassiers in the service of the late elector of Hanover."

The half-inebriated actor glanced about him with an air of self-complacency.

"And you, Amalia!" said the baron, in a low

and reproachful tone. "Do I see you thus? I am, indeed, avenged!"

"My lord, you are mistaken," faltered Chloris, coloring.

"Your protector has betrayed you. Fate brings us together after so many years of separation! I am unchanged. Come with me, Amalia, to the czar; disclose all to him, and let the past be forgotten. Our country shall know us no more, and we shall be happy elsewhere."

"My lord, I repeat, I know you not!" said Chloris, drawing back, with an expression of scorn on her pale lips. "You mistake me for some other."

"Impossible. I saw you on the stage last evening. Why keep up this deception? You have nothing to fear. Better his majesty should know all, and then you will be at peace."

"Once for all, you are under a mistake: and I pray you to quit this house."

"Will you not come? Then I will go alone, and reveal all to the czar."

Here Feigenspan, comprehending that it was incumbent on him to do something, began to urge the departure of the unwelcome visitor, who angrily shook off his grasp, with many epithets of contempt; and, with a repetition of his threats, turned to leave the apartment.

As he opened the door, a stranger stood on the threshold; a young man elegantly dressed—no other, in fact, than the young stolnik, the page of the czar, who had started at the first sight of Chloris upon the stage. Heedless of the baron or the others, he advanced towards the singer, who calmly met his gaze; and seizing her hand, exclaimed—"Maria, my father is dead; he fell at the storming of Notaburg. You are free. I conjure you now to listen to me!"

"Pardon me, sir," replied Chloris, coldly; "I have not the honor of knowing you; and must entreat that you, as well as yonder gentleman, who insists that I am somebody else, and threatens me with his vengeance, will leave my house."

"Who dares to threaten you," cried the young man, turning to the baron, "shall answer to me."

The dispute which ensued might have provoked a smile, each claiming the lady's former acquaintance by a different name. Each gave the other the lie, and a meeting was appointed as they withdrew.

"Who are these men?" asked Feigenspan, turning to his pretended niece when they had departed.

"A couple of fools," answered she, contemptuously.

"And I the third," grumbled the actor.

"Did you not compel me to come to Moscow?" said she, reproachfully.

A trial yet more severe awaited Chloris. The same day, according to her custom, she accompanied her pupil to the house of Menschikoff, who wished to observe her progress by frequently hearing her read and sing. The General was not at home; but they waited for his return, so occupied in the lesson, that they observed not the entrance

of a stranger till he spoke to inquire for Menschikoff. Chloris looked up, started wildly at sight of him, and with a cry of distress, covered her face with her hands.

"Is it you, dear mother?" exclaimed the young man, rushing to her. "How came you here? And where is my father, that I may kiss his hand?"

The singer heard him not; she had fallen back in a swoon.

"Oh, Heaven, she is dead!" exclaimed Catherine.

Her first impulse was to summon assistance; and long it was ere consciousness returned. The blue eyes slowly unclosed; the white lips murmured, "Dimitri!" but as she saw the youth's anxious looks bent upon her, she shuddered, and again closed her eyes. By this time, Feigenspan had come, in obedience to the hasty summons.

"What have you done?" he cried to the kneeling stranger. "Begone; your presence troubles her."

"She is my mother!" murmured the young man, in a voice of anguish.

"Your mother? A stupid jest! She is not older than you. Begone! you will kill her if you stay." And he led him passive from the room.

Efforts were now made to restore the unhappy lady; while Menschikoff, who had arrived, was earnestly questioning Catherine as to the cause of her emotion.

"And where is the youth?" he cried. "He must go with me to his majesty; he must be secured. The whole court is full of talk about this mysterious lady, now believed to be no other than the electoral Princess of Hanover, imprisoned on account of her intrigue with Count Konigsmark."

Scarcely had the General quitted the room, when Chloris, who had revived from her swoon, turned eagerly to Feigenspan.

"Take me from this place, from Moscow, at once!" she cried. "This instant, let us fly!"

"This instant? Impossible!" replied he. "My interests would be sacrificed."

The unfortunate lady sank on her knees before him.

"Refuse me not, Amyntas!" she cried. "Take me to Warsaw; the king shall reward you richly. You brought me hither; now, when the worst has happened, save me—I implore you, save me. Away, this very hour. Order horses immediately, and let us be far on the way before sunset. Every breath I draw in this air, poisons me!"

Her impetuous entreaties might not have prevailed with the selfish actor, but that he doubted not her ability to fulfill her promise of reward; for he had heard the words of Menschikoff. To lay a princess under obligation; to be the companion of her flight; to entitle himself to her gratitude! The czar would forgive him; the monarch to whom she fled would reward him! The star of his fortune was in the ascendant! Promising to make immediate preparation for their flight, he departed; while Chloris hastened home with her faithful friend and pupil.

Meanwhile, the General had sought and obtained an audience of the czar, to inform him of the occurrence that had taken place; that the mysterious actress, according to all appearances, was the fugitive Princess of Hanover; and that the young stranger who had but the day before arrived at the capital, had declared himself her son. Peter sent to command the attendance of the Baron von Hohenstein, who, as he well knew, had been long at the elector's court, and to whom the person of the princess was well known. But he had just fought a duel with the royal page, Matwej Roshin, and had been brought home wounded. Then came the news that the fair singer had fled. Catherine, her pupil and companion, was summoned, and, for the first time, entered the presence of the royal admirer of beauty. She could but confirm the report. The page was dispatched with fleet horses to overtake the fugitives.

"I will be at the bottom of this mystery before I sleep!" cried Peter. "The monarch of Russia may not be deceived with impunity."

Another page here entered, bearing the entreaty of the Prince Ivan Wasemskoi for an audience of his majesty. He came to complain of the detention of his adopted son, Dimitri Roshin, the eldest son of the Stolnik Semen Roshin, Waiwode of Pleskow, who had just returned from his travels through Europe.

"He had sought General Menschikoff to solicit a presentation to your majesty," continued the aged prince; "and when but now I inquired concerning him, I learned that he had been sent guarded to the Kreml, by the General's order! I beseech your majesty to tell me what has Dimitri, the noblest of young men, done to deserve the loss of your gracious favor?"

"Answer him, Menschikoff," said the czar. "Whom have you brought from your house?"

"Prince," answered the General, "the young man whom I brought to the Kreml is not Dimitri, but the Prince of Hanover."

"The Prince of Hanover?" exclaimed Wasemskoi. "Impossible! Let him be brought hither."

"Let him come," said the czar. "I know the Prince of Hanover, whom I saw four years since."

The young man was led in.

"It is *not* the prince," said Peter.

"It *is* Dimitri Roshin," cried the old man. "Why should I not know him, when he has grown up under my eyes?"

"How then calls he the princess mother? Who shall solve this enigma?" asked the monarch, impatiently.

Two hours passed before the return of the page Matwej Roshin, who had overtaken and brought back Chloris and her companion. They were led, according to the czar's command, immediately to his presence. In the midst of her confusion and the shame of her arrest, there was a stern dignity about the singer, as if, while she ceased to struggle with fate, she had nerved herself to meet misfor-

tune proudly. Her face was pale, but composed; and she met the scrutinizing gaze of the czar without shrinking. Only when he reproached her with the deceit she had practiced, did she show signs of emotion.

"It is you, madam," said Peter, "whom we must question concerning yourself; for others give contradictory accounts of you. The Baron von Hohenstein insists that you are the Lady Amalia von Molck, whom he knew at the court of Hanover; the page Matwej, that you are the widow of his father, the Waiwode of Pleskow; and others of my court, that you are the Princess of Hanover."

"The last I certainly am not," answered the lady. "To your majesty, I will speak freely; but I would fain be spared my confession before all these"—and she glanced around on several strange faces.

"Speak," said the czar, sternly, "and regard them not. They must be witnesses of the truth of what you say. I must not longer be deceived."

A painful flush mounted to the singer's forehead; but she controlled her emotion, and answered calmly. The necessity of being as brief as possible, compels us to give the reader only the substance of her declaration.

She avowed herself the unfortunate Amalia von Molck, an orphan, recommended by the Count of Konigsmark to the service of the electoral Princess of Hanover, to whom she was maid of honor. The princess, neglected and ill-used by her husband, and the object of the envy and malignity of some powerful dames of the court, made a confidant of her young attendant; and, through her, concerted with the count a plan for her escape to France. The coil of treachery and court intrigue, however, had involved her too closely; the chain was too strong to be broken, and those who served her were speedily engulfed in her ruin. The Count of Konigsmark was assassinated; the princess was arrested and sent to prison, as also was Amalia, though not till she had been able to destroy the letters which would have been wrested into proof of the guilt of her innocent though imprudent mistress, preserving only the less dangerous letters of the count, and those which concerned herself. Long and dreary was her imprisonment, and rendered more bitter by the knowledge that her name was branded with disgrace. Having, at length, succeeded in effecting her escape, she fled to Vienna, and claimed the protection of Maximilian.

By the advice of this prince, she assumed the name of Maria von Isensee; but lived in perpetual fear of discovery, till, on a visit of the czar to Vienna, one of the gentlemen in his train, Semen Roshin, sought for a governess to his daughters; and, at the suggestion of Maximilian, offered her the situation. Her life in Russia was a happy one; and when, in a few months, her master offered her his hand, the deep gratitude she felt prompted her acceptance.

Both the sons of Semen, then grown to manhood,

were invited to his wedding with his young bride. Dimitri, the eldest, educated by the care of his adopted father, the Prince Wasemskoi, was a noble youth, uniting the highest virtues to his manly gifts and graces; the younger, Matwej, was violent, headstrong, and unprincipled. It was a mournful task to her who had been his father's wife, to detail, in the royal presence, the persecutions she had suffered from his cruel passion; and relate how, when maddened by her resistance to his importunities to fly with him, he had poisoned the mind of his father against her. The waiwode's affection for his young wife was not proof against the arts employed for her ruin. Life grew a torment to her; till at length, weary of suffering and scorn, she became once more a fugitive and an outcast. Having reached Narva, alone in her flight, she went on board the Swedish brigantine bound for Dantzic. Her half-formed plan was to throw herself on the protection of the Countess Aurora, sister to the murdered Konigsmark; and, through her, obtain admission to some cloister, where she could be hidden for ever from the world. The countess, she hoped, would aid her for her brother's sake, and his letters would be her passport. The loss of her money on board the vessel; the interference of Feigenspan to protect her from the shipmaster; his payment of her debt, and proposal that she should appear in Dantzic as a public singer; her adoption of the profession, and reluctant journey to Moscow—where, however, she hoped to remain unknown—with the other adventures already related, need not detain the reader.

"You have omitted, madam, one important part of your confession," said the Prince Wasemskoi. "It is the love, unacknowledged, but deep and constant, that existed between you and Dimitri, the late waiwode's eldest son."

A deep blush covered the face of the unfortunate lady, mounting to the very temples; and receding, left it pale as marble.

"Heaven forbid! It could not be so," she exclaimed, faintly.

"What else," cried the aged prince, "but the consciousness of this, gave such bitterness to the sorrow you endured, which drove you forth from the house of your lord? What else has stamped such melancholy on *his* brow? What occasioned the emotion, the agony of both, when you met

again? Or what caused your eagerness to fly from Moscow? Nay, madam, hide not your face, for there is no cause of shame. Nobly did you bear the trials now ended. Dimitri is *not* the son of the waiwode. He is *my* son, and proud am I to claim him!"

"How is that?" demanded the czar.

"I shall tell your majesty anon how, when my wife died, I gave the infant to Roshin, who had lost his own; for I thought the sight of the orphan would be henceforth pain to me. When my love revived, I adopted him; and few in Moscow know that he is really my son." Then turning to the lady—"Be my daughter, Amalia von Roshin! The widow of Roshin may honorably wed the son of Ivan Wasemskoi!"

"My blessing shall be theirs!" cried the czar, who read in the countenances of Amalia and Dimitri the joy of both. "For thee, Matwej, who didst so cruelly conspire against thy father's wife, be henceforth the slave of her thou hast wronged."\*

"Mercy, mercy for him," pleaded the lady. "He is punished—let him go free."

"Go, then," said the monarch; and having knelt to kiss the hem of Amalia's robe, the discarded page withdrew.

The nuptials of Dimitri and Amalia were celebrated with great magnificence, the czar himself bestowing the bride. By way of favor to her, he appointed Feigenspan superintendent of the royal theatre. At his request, Madam Wasemskoi continued her lessons to her beloved pupil Catherine, whose beauty had greatly pleased the monarch. On his return from laying the foundation of a new city, in honor of his victories—to which he gave the name of Petersburg—he crowned the favor he had shown the fair girl, by a secret marriage; and after she had borne him children, acknowledged publicly his marriage with her, and elevated her to share his throne and power. It is well known that, through the good offices of her friend, General Menschikoff, Catherine rose to be the first Empress of Russia. The highest office under the sovereign was filled by the Prince Dimitri Wasemskoi, whose wife, having once been the teacher of the empress, always remained her friend.

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\* A single word of the czar might reduce a Russian nobleman to the condition of a slave.

## THE ROYAL SISTERS-IN-LAW.

BY JULIET H. L. CAMPBELL.

### CHAPTER I.

THE human race is ever progressive. From the time of our first parents in the garden, we have been steadily advancing in knowledge and refinement; and each succeeding age, in complacent wisdom, looks back upon the ignorance of its predecessors. In the sixteenth century, France took the precedence of all the nations of the earth in this onward march. Under the fostering care of Louis XII. and Francis I. (who maintained, at the expense of government, "professors whose business it was to lecture to as many students as chose to hear"), the ambitious youth of all countries flocked to Paris, and France became the seminary of the world. On the accession of the weak and pleasure-loving Henry, the beneficial results of the wisdom which preceded him lent a lustre to his court; and it continued to be the rallying-point of learning and the arts.

Beza, Seve, Pellétier, Bellay, Ronsard, and Iodelle were the sons which that age gave to science and the muse. Their lofty names, rescued from oblivion's engulfing waves, have floated down the tide to far posterity; but the *legion* of authors and scholars who were famous then for their bold crusade against ignorance, have been lost in intervening time; but they have left their impress on the age in its emancipation from the thrall of that barbarity against which they battled.

The statesmen of those days have filled the world with their renown, and the names of their cotemporary warriors are enshrined in immortality. The formidable brotherhood of the house of Guise, whose respective members graced the court, the camp, the church, and the council; the Bourbon brothers, Anthony, Duke of Navarre, and Louis, Prince of Condé; the family of the famous Montmorency, who had enjoyed the confidence of the three last Gallic monarchs—all lent their laurels to adorn this reign. "Fair women and brave men" are inseparable; and at Henry's court clustered the loveliest and most remarkable women of the time. His own consort, Catherine de Medicis, shone in all the lustre of transcendent talent and unfaded bloom, while the vices which afterward deformed her character lay undeveloped in her bosom. His sister, the Princess Margaret, a beautiful example of female loveliness, and the idol of the nation; his two fair daughters, just verging to womanhood, carefully reared and accomplished; and his beautiful ward, the renowned Mary Stuart, added interest to his court.

The gayety of Henry's reign was unexampled.

Summer tournaments and fêtes were succeeded by winter festivals and masquerades. Sailing, fishing, and hunting; snow-balling, skating, and dancing, occupied alternately the attention of the royal votaries of pleasure; and the palaces and gardens of Paris seemed almost to embody the poet's dream of paradise.

One lovely day in July, the gardens of Fontainebleau echoed with the gayety of a *fête champêtre*; and the noble revelers, dispensing with the stately etiquette of more ceremonious meetings, wandered as impulse prompted amid the natural and artificial adornments of this charmed spot.

A mirthful and boisterous party, consisting of a dozen persons in the very dawn of youth, stood under the trees near a fountain; and prominent amid them all was one who became the heroine of many an after tale. Her features narrowly escaped being Grecian—her nose being somewhat longer and her lips fuller than the antique model. Her bright brown eyes, chameleon-like, varied in hue with the maiden's mood; seeming blue in her sunniest moments, but growing almost black with thought or sorrow. Her hair, a beautiful auburn, defying restraint, clustered in short, close curls around a brow, the high and fair expanse of which gave a regal character to her girlish face. The dazzling whiteness of her complexion, and the no less dazzling radiance of her wreathing smiles, imparted that sunny, seraphic expression which may be observed in pictures of the halo-encircled head of the Madonna. Oh, *Mary Stuart* was born to reign a queen! Four other members of this interesting group were the celebrated Scotch Marys—Mary Beaton, Mary Fleming, Mary Livingston, and Mary Seaton. These young girls were near the age of their royal mistress; and had been selected, while yet in infancy, from the Scotch nobility, to share the charming exile of the baby queen. They had emulated her studies in the convent, and were now beginning to taste with her the intoxications of the court. The sixth figure in the group was the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of the reigning monarch, whose beauty, although not so conspicuous as that of her royal companion, was scarcely less enchanting. Her face was more pensive, her movements more gentle than Mary Stuart's, whose impetuous mountain blood endowed its possessor with energy and action. A younger sister of Elizabeth's, entertaining her brothers Charles and Henri with an animated narrative, completed the group.

Aloof from the rest, a pale, slender boy of sixteen stood leaning against a tree, with melancholy eyes

contemplant the mirth in which he did not venture to mingle. Then, as the boisterous Charles laughed, with unrestrained hilarity, at the narrative of his lively sister, he turned away with a long-drawn, heavy breath. Was it envy that prompted the sigh of the young dauphin?

"See," cried Mary Livingston, as her eye rested on a magnificent retinue in the distance, "yonder is the queen and all the gay gallants of the court. How they follow her footsteps and listen to her words! Oh! it must be delightful to be a queen!"

"Mary Stuart is a queen," said another, "but she is as one of us; she reads with us, studies with us, dances with us, and—"

"Queen of the Barbarians," interrupted Mary Stuart, laughing; and then added, more seriously—"Oh, if you could hear my lady mother tell of her savage subjects, her rude nobles, and her joyless court, you would not envy me my poor kingdom."

"But to be Queen of *France*," suggested the Princess Elizabeth, archly, alluding to the betrothal of Mary to the heir of that kingdom.

Mary crimsoned, and glanced hurriedly at the boy dauphin; but, seeing he observed them not, replied, with merry raillery—

"Yes, or of *Spain*!"

The young girls, by their ready mirth, testified their appreciation of Mary's quick retort, for it was well understood that the princess was regarded with tenderness by Don Carlos of Spain.

"They are belle countries," cried Mary Beaton, "but it is wearisome to be a queen! I would rather be a nun, and so would you," addressing the Queen of Scots. "Ah, you shall be Sister Genevieve, and I will be Sister Anastasia, and our days will glide peacefully away in holy prayers to our sweet Mary Mother, and sublime anthems to the glorious heaven of which she is queen. Oh, Mary Stuart, we will be nuns!" and the enthusiast clasped the hand of her mistress between her own.

"I would like to be a nun," said Mary Stuart, gently, touched by the animated earnestness of her attendant. "You know how dearly I loved our convent life; but my uncle, the cardinal, says it is not the will of God."

"And *my* uncle, the cardinal, says I was born to be a nun. I'm sure it is happiness to sit quietly in the calm cloister, where care and sorrows never come, than to marry some odious lord whom one cannot choose but hate."

Again Mary Stuart's eyes sought her boy lover, and this time encountered his gaze fixed upon her. A shade of anguish crossed his countenance, and he turned away.

Mary saw, with ready sympathy, the disquiet of the dauphin, and flew to his side, saying, "Nay, Francis, do not leave us."

He paused, and looked in the fair young face of his betrothed, with an expression of sad inquiry, mingled with reproach.

"You would be a nun, Mary!"

"Oh! Francis, I thought so once, but I do not desire it now—indeed I do not."

Mary spoke the truth; her introduction to the gayeties of the court had entirely dissipated her predilection for the cloister.

"You prefer being the wife of a husband you must hate," continued Francis, with petulant jealousy.

"Nay, nay; those were not *my* words," said Mary, good-humoredly. "And, indeed, Francis, *you know* I love you."

This artless confession, so unlike the Mary Stuart of after years, soothed the ruffled feelings of the lover, although it failed to overcome his self-distrust.

"How can you love *me*, Mary? *You*, so peerless, so beautiful! you, around whom the gallants of my father's court cluster in adulation and homage. No marvel that I fear the gay, the handsome, and the noble will win your heart from me, a poor timid boy."

"Nay, dearest Francis, I know naught of them beyond the hour; but you I have known from infancy. And you are so good and gentle to all, so tender to me, how can I help loving you?"

The sad eyes of the dauphin lighted with triumphant gladness. It was a proud thing to be beloved by the peerless beauty; it was a precious thing to be beloved by the object of his young heart's idolatry.

## CHAPTER II

THE marriage of Mary, Queen of Scots, to the Dauphin of France, was one of the most imposing spectacles of that age of wonders, and called forth all the enthusiasm of the most enthusiastic nation in the world. The ceremony was celebrated in the renowned cathedral of Notre Dame; after which, the royal cortège partook of a magnificent collation at the palace of the Archbishop of Rouen. They then returned to the palace of the Tournelles, where a banquet was prepared, the splendors of which defy description. The royal party feasted at a marble table, with "one hundred gentlemen" in attendance as musicians, and "princes of the blood" as servitors. Supper was followed by a series of magnificent pageants, at which modern royalty would stand aghast, and own itself a neophyte. In the midst of the festivities, twelve artificial horses, magnificently caparisoned, rode down the hall, each bearing the young heir of a noble house. Then followed six galleys, decked with cloth of gold and richest hangings, with a youthful cavalier on the deck of each; who, as the fairy barge sailed down the hall, advanced and bore amid the admiring revelers the lady of his heart. On one of these galleys sat an illustrious stranger, whose large eyes glistened with the lustre and blackness of kindling coal, while his olive complexion betrayed the rich dark blood of Castile. This was Don Carlos, only



son of Philip II. of Spain.\* As the curious mechanism moved down the hall, he leaped to the side of the Princess Elizabeth, led her to a seat on his barque, threw himself at her feet, and glided from the gaze of the applauding court.

"My beautiful one," said the Spaniard, "look up, and smile to-night, for to-morrow I may not bask in my lady's favor."

"So soon?" sighed Elizabeth; and her cheek paled. "Ah, yes, so soon," responded the impassioned son of Spain. "But we will give to love the moments which are left. Let me tell thee once more how long I have worshiped thee. Oh, Elizabeth, in my very boyhood thy bright image was enshrined in my gloomy heart, filling it with light and glory, like the angel in the sepulchre. And as I grew to manhood, its every pulsation has beat with a deeper, truer, stronger love for thee. I have not loved thee vainly, for thy royal father has promised thou shalt be mine; and I am filled with joyful and triumphant exultation. Speak, dearest, and say that my bride is not the victim of a father's policy; say that she brings the priceless dower of love to her affianced."

"A victim!" she exclaimed, reproachfully. "Couldst thou look into my heart, and see how its thoughts and hopes have centered in thee; couldst thou hear me nightly thanking the Virgin for my blessed lot, and imploring her to preserve our love from blight, thou wouldst not question me."

"How eloquently am I answered! But, beloved, fear not; for our love must prosper. Have not the kind Fates favored us in all things? They prompted me to love thee; and oh! bliss, they have bidden thee love me in turn. They have instigated Henry and Philip, thy sire and mine, each to desire, most earnestly, an alliance which will secure the friendship of his powerful neighbor. What, then, can part me from my bride?"

"I know not, Carlos; and yet a weight of foreboding oppresses me. I cannot feel joyous to-night, even with thee. Love as intense as ours is fearful, and I tremble lest our happiness may not last."

"Thou hast been consulting the astrologer, Nos-tradamus," said the lover. "Nay, hide it not, but tell me his prophecy."

"He told me I should be Queen of Spain," said the lady, timidly.

"Ha! said I not so?" cried the impetuous lover. "And what next?"

"That the *crown* should be my *cross*."

"Never!" exclaimed Carlos; "never, as I am a true knight and Christian gentleman! Dost doubt me, dearest?"

"I doubt thee not," she answered, meekly; "and *fear naught* save losing thee."

"How soon will I teach thee to mock at that fear! I leave you to-morrow; but when next we meet, I will be here to *claim my bride*!"

When next they met!

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\* I have taken the liberty of introducing him on this occasion without the sanction of history.

THE affection subsisting between the dauphin and dauphiness was of a very different nature from that entertained by the lovers. Francis and Mary were sixteen years of age at the time of their union; but she was tall, finely developed, and womanly; he slight, delicate, and boyish in appearance. The one looked older, the other younger than was really the case. The dauphin loved most tenderly the bride which policy had assigned him; but, mingled with his admiration of her lustrous charms, was a sense of his own inferiority and unworthiness, which occasioned him intense pain. It is hardly possible that the unfortunate dauphin could have inspired his gifted consort with the same passionate love which he entertained for her; but strong minds, like Mary's, rejoice in the appealing love of weak ones; and his amiable, affectionate nature, his timid self-distrust, were very touching to the tender heart of the playmate of his infancy, now the wife of his youth. We doubt if the *depths* of her nature had been stirred by the invalid boy; but she loved him with a generous affection, and devoted herself to him with assiduity.

"The couriers bring weighty news to-night," said Elizabeth to the dauphiness, who had but just arrived from the palace. "Queen Mary, of England, is dead."

"Ah!" said the merry Mary, "we must congratulate your ladyship on your deliverance from so fierce a mother-in-law."

"Poor lady!" sighed the gentle Elizabeth, "with all her faults, I cannot but pity her unhappiness. Oh! Mary, it must be a living death to be scorned and slighted, as she was, by the husband of one's love!"

"We must hope that the *son* will prove a better husband than the *father*," said the Queen of Scots, playfully.

Elizabeth raised her meek eyes to the speaker, full of anguish and reproach.

"Sweet one, forgive me!" cried the queen, winding her arm around her sister-in-law; "I did but jest. Carlos is as unlike Philip as day is unlike night, or Elizabeth of France unlike Mary of England. You will be happy, lady bird—happy beyond your fondest dreams—happy as I now am."

The two young creatures, with arms entwined, stood looking from the window in silence. Elizabeth was musing of the future and her lover, while Mary's thoughts were busy with the fate of queens.

"Mary, of England, in experiencing domestic unhappiness, has but shared the common lot of queens," said the youthful moralist. "The hand of a princess must be bestowed for the welfare of her kingdom, though sorrow and blight be her portion. This martyrdom of the heart is the penalty of royalty. But we, sweet sister, you and I, are favored by Heaven. When I think of *my* union to one who from childhood has been dear to me, and all the happy moments of my unclouded life; when

I think of the fond devotion of *your* affianced to the bright lady of his choice, and her unutterable tenderness in return, I almost think that Providence has forgotten our royalty."

Elizabeth's eyes sparkled, and her cheek glowed while the queen spoke; and she ejaculated, "Oh! we are indeed blessed!"

Could Mary, of Scotland, from the pinnacle on which she stood, have looked down the dim aisles of futurity, and marked the sorrows gathered in her path—the outraged love; the humbled pride; the thwarted ambition; the crushing, in turn, of every passion of her noble nature—could she have marked, in this hour of triumphant happiness, her faltering footsteps, winding downward through a life of woe and weariness to a death of degradation, her mighty spirit would have burst its bonds and folded its wings in heaven. Could Elizabeth, of France, have realized the horrors which beset her shorter pathway to the tomb, her gentle heart would have broken *then* instead of a few years later, and thus escaped the anguish through which it was destined to win its way to rest.

Even while these fated ones reveled in the security of present bliss, the cloud was rising; "no bigger than a man's hand," which was soon to shroud their heaven.

The death of Queen Mary, of England, was an event which gave unmingled satisfaction to her husband, Philip, King of Spain; and he lost no time in searching among the daughters of royalty for a more pleasing successor. The beauty of Elizabeth was alike a theme for gossip and minstrelsy in the Spanish court, and awakened in the king a determination to make the *fiancée* of his son his own.

France and Spain were at this time engaged in a war, which had been attended with such successes to the Gallic arms, as (in the language of a French historian) "secured to that country an advantageous peace." But Henry, who was neither warrior nor statesman, neglected to avail himself of the advantage which these triumphs gave him, and submitted to his enemy's terms. By the treaty of Cambray, styled among his people the "*paix maudite et malheureuse*," he relinquished all which had been gained by the bravery of his arms, and promised in marriage his daughter Elizabeth to Philip, and his sister Margaret to the Duke of Savoy.

The news of this new disposition of her hand fell on the heart of Elizabeth with overwhelming horror. In the flushing of youth, love, hope, and happiness, a summons to the tomb would have been more welcome. *There*, at least, she would find repose; *here*, naught but lingering, hopeless disquiet of the heart. Resistance she felt would be vain; for those were days when youth and loveliness were the legitimate traffic of power. We turn shuddering from the unnatural Circassian, who sells one daughter to buy bread for the rest, forgetting the long list of illustrious examples afforded by history, of men who have sacrificed their own blood for the less excusable purpose of self-aggrandizement.

The marriage was celebrated with the usual rejoicing; the Duke of Alva acting as proxy for the kindly bridegroom. There was a relief in this: *he*, at least, was not tied to her for life; *his* presence excited no loathing, his language no disgust. *He* was *nothing* to her. Banquet, masquerade, tilt, and tournament followed; and the unhappy bride moved amid them all an automaton, impelled by the eternal springs of habit, scarcely feeling the bitterness of their mockery. Excessive grief had stupefied her brain, paralyzed her soul, and, in mercy, prevented her from realizing the extent of her despair.

On the other hand, the marriage of his daughter, and the consequent rejoicings, filled Henry with delight. He mingled in the sports with boyish avidity, and himself pressed the Count Montgomerie to meet him in the lists. The count's spear being broken in the encounter, he attacked his adversary with the stump, and a splinter from the shivered weapon pierced the eye of the king. The wound was considered trivial at the time, but in eight days Henry the Second was no more.

This new calamity roused Elizabeth from her mental stupor, and she shed tears; blessed, refreshing tears of unaffected grief. In the first gush of sorrow, subdued into tenderness toward a parent who was no more, and awed by the presence of the mighty conqueror who says to the wild waves of passion "*be still*," the memory of her rebellious grief filled her with remorse. But, as her mind grew familiar with these new emotions, the old agony returned; and from the midst of sorrow and darkness, hope arose like a star. A fond, wild hope—a hope that first faintly cheered her drooping heart—then kindled into certainty. She could *yet* be saved! The will she had obeyed was powerless to trammel her; the father who had urged her fate was no more, and she would be *free*. True, she was already wedded; but she had not seen her lord. She was in France, Philip in Spain; and the mock espousal with his proxy could not be of sufficient strength to bind her while the rites between herself and Philip were unperformed. The chains were forged; but they had not yet received their final rivet. *She would be free!*

#### CHAPTER IV.

FRANCIS and Mary, together with the royal household, were awaiting the carriage which was to convey them to the Louvre, where the young king was to make his first appearance as sovereign. The timid Francis paced the gallery in nervous excitement, while his sympathizing queen walked at his side. His rapid strides soon separated them from their attendants, when Mary laid her hand on his arm, saying—

"Be composed, Francis; you will meet no strangers."

"No," said the new king, perceiving he was alone with his consort, "No, my Mary; I think I

could face strangers bravely. It is meeting my own people and my own nobles that I fear—my people, to whom I owe solemn duties which I feel incompetent to discharge; and my nobles, who know and note my ineptitude. Think you it is a light thing, Mary, for an inexperienced youth, like your poor husband, to mount the throne, and essay to govern minds superior to his own? Will Francis of Guise, will Charles of Lorraine, will Navarre, or D'Aumale, or all the host of nobles whose stalwart frames surround the throne; whose restless, active minds outplot my own—will they not scorn their puerile king, even while they bend the knee? Will they long submit to a rule they despise?"

"Hush, Francis! I will not listen to such mournful tales. These men are grayer than my young liege, and can boast the wisdom which experience brings; but where can be found more kingly qualities than your goodness of heart, your kindly benevolence, your love of justice, your sense of right, your—your—"

"Stop," my Mary, said the king, impressing a kiss on the lovely lips so eloquent with his praises; "you are inventing as many virtues for Francis II. as adorned the character of his illustrious namesake. I will soon hear those sweet lips pronounce an eulogy on my valor and prowess in arms."

"Not so; I am done with praises," laughed Mary. "And now I shall entertain your majesty with a catalogue of faults. First, you are too humble."

"Now look," cried he, "how my only virtue plays deserter, and swells the frightful array against me!"

"Then, you are too submissive, which is childish; and too timid and shrinking, which is womanly; and too fond of solitude, which befits a hermit rather than a king; and—"

Mary paused in her railery, as she observed a tear glisten in the eye of her husband; and throwing her arms around him, she added, with playful fondness—

"And all these faults resolve themselves into one, which is, non-appreciation of your own noble nature. In the breast of Francis beats the only traitorous heart in France; and I must detect and punish it now, lest it betray him hereafter. I say to you now, my beloved, have *confidence in yourself*."

While the young sovereigns conversed thus, Catherine de Medicis walked the adjoining gallery, with her wild passions writhing like a nest of vipers in her heart. She, proud, ambitious, and aspiring, had gloried in her position as queen during the reign of Henry; and at his death, she grieved less for the husband of her bosom than the pomp and power which he had conferred upon her, and which passed away with him. It was a galling reflection that her successor was one who had grown from childhood under her eye and authority; one who had sat at her feet and revered her behests up to the moment when the sceptre passed from her grasp, and the fair protégé assumed the seat of the dethroned queen. Could she, she asked herself, sub-

mit to the rule of one from whom she was accustomed to exact obedience, in the very court where she had ruled supreme? Could she endure to shine a star of lesser magnitude in the galaxy which had gloried most in *her* beams? These bitter thoughts tormented the brain of the dethroned, engendering for her rival a deadly hate—a hate which, like a simoom, withered and shriveled the kindlier feelings of her heart like summer flowers; a hate which called aloud for sacrifice, which overcame a mother's love for her first-born, and bade her thirst for his immolation—a hate which was not destined to be for ever impotent.

The carriage was announced, and the royal party proceeded as far as the staircase before the absence of the Queen Dowager was observed. A gentleman in waiting returned in search of Catherine, whom he found so lost in her own reflections as to be unconscious of the departure of her party. Francis and Mary drew back as she approached, to accord to the queen mother the precedence which had hitherto been her right, and Catherine swept onward to the first stair. Suddenly she started as though a serpent lay in her path; then raised her malignant eyes to Mary, saying—

"Pass on, madam; *it is your turn now*."

The young queen felt the covert bitterness of her mother-in-law's words; but, bowing her acquiescence, she and her royal consort led the way to the carriage. At its steps she paused; and, turning to Catherine, who ill deserved such gentle amiability, said—

"After you, dear madam, if you please."

Touched by the respectful tenderness of her manner, Catherine accepted her courtesy; the carriage rolled away to the Louvre, and in a short time Mary Stuart made her debut as *Queen of France*.

And now the destiny of Mary Stuart had reached its culminating glory. Queen of France and Scotland—the one the land of her birth and ancestry, the other of her love and adoption—heir-presumptive to the crown of England, then, as now, one of the most powerful kingdoms of Europe; fate seemed delighting to invest the fair young girl with the might and majesty of unexampled power. No less a favorite of Nature than of Fortune, the triumphs of the woman equaled those of the queen. Her varied intellectual gifts, her carefully cultivated accomplishments, commanded more than the respect or admiration of men; while her queenly grace and wondrous loveliness elicited from all the rapturous homage which valor was wont to pay to beauty in those chivalric days.

But the meridian once passed, the sun must descend; and the day that dawns with brightest promise too often ends in clouds and storm.

The virtues which Mary attributed to her husband, and which she fondly hoped a manlier confidence in himself might make apparent, were destined to be undeveloped. A short reign of a year and a half was all that was permitted the young sovereign; and Francis II. sank into the tomb, leaving no me-

mento on the minds of men save having been the husband of the most remarkable woman of the age.

We do no injustice to the monstrous heart of Catherine de Medicis to say that she was elated by the death of her first-born. The only obstacle in the way of her ambition was removed; and the widowed Mary descended from the throne, while Catherine (as regent during the minority of her next son) regained the position of which she had been deprived for a season.

Mary mourned the loss of a husband to whom she was tenderly attached, with all the abandonment of a young heart to its first grief; but the sorrow of the wife provoked the malice of the mother. She who rejoiced in the death of her son could not endure the tears which were shed to his memory. They seemed not merely a tribute to the dead, but a reproach to the living. So many methods did the Queen Regent pursue to annoy the royal mourner, that Mary felt that France, the beloved home of her childhood, could be no more an asylum for her. She turned her weeping eyes to the cold hills of Scotland, and resolved to seek the land which still acknowledged her a queen. But the rude spirits of her native land frowned uninvitingly upon her; her recent bereavement still filled her heart with woe; and the memories of pleasures for ever passed were lights which served more clearly to reveal her present desolation. Sadly, and with prophetic fearfulness, she bade adieu to France; and commenced that troubled pilgrimage which found no rest this side of heaven.

The history of Mary Stuart has become a fireside tale. Her joyless after life, beset by vexations and misfortunes, without one point on which the mind can repose, saying "here she found *peace*"—the faults or follies which those trials engendered—are familiar to all. And we may well imagine that the block seemed to her a fitting as well as welcome termination of a career so sadly disastrous.

## CHAPTER V.

"And now our hopes, like morning stars,  
Have one by one died out."—*Anon.*

Thus, the hopes which glimmered through the despair of Elizabeth vanished. The ministry of France was too well aware of the advantages resulting from her projected union to permit it to be abandoned. Even had the marriage been as distasteful to her country as it was to herself, matters had proceeded too far for either party to retract with safety or honor; and the unwilling bride was borne to Toledo to meet her lord.

Philip, anxious to make a favorable impression on his bride, adorned himself with more than ordinary care. His short mantle, falling from the left shoulder, was gathered in graceful folds under the right arm, and displayed to the best advantage his small but prepossessing person. The various orders which he wore were partially concealed by this

becoming vesture; but the collar and upper part of his doublet blazed with their broidery of jewels. His long beard and curling mustache were combed and perfumed with choicest extracts; and on his head he wore a hat peculiar to the times, from which drooped a single white plume. The haughty severity of his countenance filled the timid princess with terror; and she gazed on him with the shrinking aspect of a frightened child.

"Ha!" said Philip after a moment's pause, during which the young girl's aversion for her bridegroom was apparent, "so you already see my gray hairs?"

She did not hazard a reply; and Philip, with a vanity which belongs to age as well as youth, was piqued to find that a girl of sixteen would not at first sight fall in love with his yellow face.

The royal marriage was celebrated with the usual ceremonies; and Elizabeth performed her painful part with the air of one in a dream—one whose spirit was leading another life in some far-off realm of fancy, away from the poor frame it still endowed with sentience.

But turning from the altar, the air grew rare around her—filled with an indescribable something fraught with sweet associations and happy memories; those mysterious sympathies which, quicker than the sluggish senses, announce to the spirit the presence of its beloved. Then the wandering mind of the lady returned; and the downcast eyes, glancing rapidly and eagerly around, rested for a moment on the form they sought.

Leaning against a column, with his mantle folded on his bosom, and his whole attitude eloquent of sorrow, stood the lover. His fine eyes were bent on hers with the melancholy of despairing passion and, as she encountered their thrilling gaze, her head reeled and her footsteps faltered.

"Tremble not, lady mine," said the royal bridegroom. "On, on—to the door; the queen needs air!"

QUEEN! Yes, her fate was sealed, and she was now a *Queen*!

And *thus they met* who had parted in happiness and hope, believing that their next meeting would unite their loving hearts for ever—thus they met with an impassable gulf between.

Impassable, Elizabeth well knew it to be; and she roused her broken spirit, endowing it with womanly fortitude to grapple with her fate. She felt that she was now the wife of Philip—the Queen of Spain. She felt, too, that she was the daughter of a kingly line; and, animated by the heroic blood of her race, she resolved that neither her ancient lineage, her exalted station, nor her womanly pride should be dishonored.

Don Carlos still frequented his father's court, and, for a season, hung upon the footsteps of his father's queen; but lip, cheek, and eye had grown obedient to her purpose, and Carlos watched vainly for a token that he was still beloved. In all the trying positions in which the queen was placed, she bore

herself with a gentle dignity that won the respect and love of all beholders.

When the sweet images of happiness and love which woman cherishes are stricken from her heart, she mourns, indeed, in anguish o'er her broken idols; but bows in sad submission to the great Iconoclast. But, when the projects which the plotting brain of man has nurtured are overthrown by a mightier Disposer of events, his spirit rises in fierce though impotent rebellion against the hand which swept across his path in desolation. Thus was it with Carlos. His restless mind was filled with projects to amend or avenge his lot. He would strive against obstacles, struggle with impossibilities, and baffle fate itself.

The Queen of Spain sat by her open window, gazing in vacant listlessness upon the gorgeous evening sky. Her bloom had waned in Spain; but her beauty was more witching than ever—as the soft beaming of the moon in meridian surpasses in loveliness the flush of her red rising. The pale, pure face, the ethereal figure, were such as might have graced a vision; and the gazer almost feared to see such fragile loveliness dissolve in air.

A rustling amid the arras caused her to turn her head; but the apartment, with the exception of herself, seemed tenantless.

Again the hangings stirred, parted; and Carlos was at her feet.

"You forget yourself, Don Carlos," said the queen. "I pray you leave me!"

"Not until I have told you all my love—no; that I have told you long ago—but not until I teach you a portion of my suffering. Oh, Elizabeth, to see my bride torn from my arms and worn upon the bosom of another, and that other her and my oppressor! 'tis more than man can bear, and I will not bear it!"

"Hush! hush!" said the affrighted queen.

"To be thwarted in the love of my youth, the only pure and holy passion of my heart," continued Carlos; "to feel my wrongs closing around me, in a line of fire, until the elements of bitterness and hatred seethe within my bosom like the accursed lake; to bear all this in smiling silence, as though I cared not—is not for me. *I will speak*, though half the kingdom *listen*—ay, and *I will strike*, though half the kingdom *bleed*!"

"Don Carlos, listen to me."

She laid her hand upon his arm to command attention, and bent her gaze down into the depths of his fierce eyes. Like an enraged lion tamed by a fearless human glance, he arose and stood in silence.

"Listen," she repeated, "for a moment, and then this subject must be dismissed for ever. Whatever my sufferings may have been, I have striven to bear them. My duties are clear to me, and I am resolved to fulfill them. The wife I would have been to you, had Heaven so willed it, I shall endeavor to be to your father. In the mean time"—here her voice faltered—"if you ever loved me, throw no obstacles in a path already somewhat rugged. Learn to endure; and remember that, whatever the Princess

of France may have been to you, the Queen of Spain is *naught*. Leave me now, and seek me not again."

The fiery Spaniard gazed upon her with surprise. She stood so calm, so mild, so passionless, he marvelled at the spell in the few words she had spoken. Whatever it might be, the strong man was powerless to resist it; and lifting his plumed hat from the floor, he turned away. When he reached the door, he turned again to look upon the treasure he had lost. Her soft eyes met his, full of peaceful light. He groaned aloud "Oh! Elizabeth!" and was gone.

Then came *her* hour of pain and passion. The heart her strong will had curbed so well in his presence throbbed fearfully now. She clasped her small hands to her side, and breathed in short, quick gasps, as though body and soul were parting. But her hour had *not yet come*.

There are glorious records of holy men beset by dangers and temptations, who have held fast and firm their faith mid fiery tortures, and gone to their reward. The strong resolves of mind, unshaken by the weakness of the flesh to which it is allied, are, indeed, sublime. Less exalted, perhaps, but scarcely less heroic, are the more secret struggles of woman when she listens to the pleadings of the passion she has inspired, sees the strong agony of the man she loves, yet falters not in her path of duty, turns not aside to speak one dangerous word of love or soothing. She, too, has made a mighty sacrifice; she, too, will meet her reward.

Don Carlos retired from the presence of the queen with the fierceness of his passions allayed. Her resolute words had fallen like oil on troubled waters; but, in the solitude of his apartment, his reflections on all that had passed added fuel to the flame. He paced back and forth like an enraged tiger, muttering vows of vengeance as he walked. "So good, so beautiful, so true! and lost to me! How has my heart been robbed! But I will yet recover my own; or, failing in that, I will have vengeance! Thank God, he has not only played the tyrant to me, but to his people. Their wrongs are my strength; for they chafe as I do, and pant for revenge. The Netherlands are ripe for revolt, and only wait for a leader." He paused a moment, as though weighing the consequences of some important step; then striking his breast resolutely, said—"Their leader is *HERE*!"

Having examined the lock of curious construction attached to his door, he closed and secured it; then examining his pistols, he placed them, with a small dagger, beneath his pillow, and retired to rest.

The precautions of the prince were by no means unnecessary, for Philip was aware of Carlos's angry feelings toward himself. He also knew that Don Carlos had been intriguing with the most disaffected of his subjects for the purpose of dethroning him; and the king was not a man who would allow even his only son to escape unpunished.

About midnight, Don Carlos was awakened by

feeling both arms grasped tightly. He opened his eyes; but all was dark. He essayed to rise, but found himself held firmly down. Suddenly, a stream of light fell through the apartment, revealing to the unfortunate prince the nature and number of his assailants. Around his head, he recognized the officers of the Inquisition; behind them were the Prince D'Eboli and Ruis de Gómez, favorites of his father, and foes to himself; and in their midst stood the king himself. At the command of his father, Carlos arose; and, looking for his clothes, perceived they had been removed, and a suit of mourning substituted.

"What!" he cried, "am I condemned already?"

He was with difficulty arrayed in the obnoxious garments; but resistance to superior numbers was unavailing; and, in this sombre dress, he was borne to the prison of the Inquisition.

To the tender mercies of this tribunal did King Philip abandon his only child; bidding "the fathers" forget "the dignity of his birth, the splendor of his rank, the authority he bore in the monarchy," and deal with him as with the meanest of his subjects. The prince had been so unfortunate as to excite the wrath of "the fathers" by pronouncing an eulogium upon Calvin and Luther, of which they had complained to the king; it is, therefore, probable that this exhortation of Philip was not requisite to insure severity.

## CHAPTER VI.

In the apartment which had witnessed the intrusion of Don Carlos, Elizabeth lay upon her couch; while near her sat a tall, fine-looking woman, with her embroidery in her hand. The lady suspended her work, and leaned upon the frame, as though her mind was filled with other images, to the exclusion of fruits and flowers; and ever and anon her eyes grew moist and dim. She quietly wiped the tears away, and continued musing until her dark eyes filled again.

"Aunt," said Elizabeth—for it was the Duchess

of Savoy she addressed—"what new grief is in store for me? I well know the old sorrows cannot move you thus."

"I was thinking of the King of Spain."

"What of him?" questioned the queen.

"He is *childless*."

"What!" gasped Elizabeth. "Don Carlos—have they murdered him?"

"I know not, dearest," said the duchess, kissing tenderly the brow of her niece; "but be calm, and I will tell you the rumors which are abroad. Some men say he was basely murdered by the emissaries of the king; others accuse him boldly of conspiring against the crown, and legalize the deed under the name of '*execution*.'"

"But Philip—what says he?"

"The king asserts that he was the victim of disease; and professes to be in the deepest affliction on account of the loss of his heir."

"False hypocrite!"

The duchess was silent for several minutes, that Elizabeth might regain her self-control. Finding her calm and silent, she besought her to rise.

"No, aunt," she answered, faintly, covering her face as she spoke; "I cannot rise now."

"The king may expect to see you, under the circumstances," suggested the duchess; for she desired that the feelings of her niece, so sedulously mastered and concealed, should not be betrayed now.

"Excuse me to him. I cannot see *him*."

Her shuddering frame and pallid features convinced the duchess that the appearance of Elizabeth would betray rather than conceal her secret, and she urged her no further.

"Poor child," murmured the sympathizing Margaret; "she has struggled with a great grief and endured long; no marvel her strength fails her in this terrible catastrophe."

Thank Heaven, humanity cannot *endure* for ever! The heroic spirit of Elizabeth had wrestled bravely with its woes, but the fragile frame was exhausted by the contest. In two months more, another heir was born to Spain; and the grave closed kindly over the broken heart of Elizabeth.

## THE THREE CALLS.

BY ANNA MASON.

It was a warm afternoon in July that I strolled out to call upon a few friends. They were familiar acquaintances, and their houses of residence were places where one can "*make one's self at home*" in the true sense of the word. That is, I could, if I wished, sit and read—and that, too, without interruption—or stroll into the flower-garden; or amuse myself in any way I chose, without all the formalities and *commonplaces* so usually attendant upon formal calls. It would be well if there were more of this free, unrestrained intercourse among friends in New England, and less formality and reserve.

In a community where domestic cares occupy so large a portion of the time of our ladies, it would be very convenient, to say the least, if we were not obliged, by the force of custom, to leave our avocations immediately upon the call of a friend, and sit *tête-à-tête* with them during their stay, lest another course should give offence.

But more of this another time. My first call this afternoon was upon Mrs. R—, whose aged father resides with her. On entering the sitting-room, I perceived the old gentleman's spectacles upon the table, near which lay an open "*Lady's Book*."

The venerable man himself sat near in his old arm-chair; by his appearance, evidently absorbed in deep thought, for he did not observe my entrance, and his position did not indicate sleep. He is one of those rare relics of a past generation, whose presence among us we highly prize—a true hero of the Revolution, who served his country during the whole war as a soldier. He is now eighty-eight years of age; but his keen black eye is still undimmed, and sparkles with the fire of youth. The strong good sense with which nature abundantly endowed him, seems to have lost none of its force; and though he feels the bodily infirmities of age, his mental powers retain much of their freshness and vigor. His fine personal appearance, warm heart, and agreeable social qualities render him a most entertaining companion. I did not disturb his recovery; but, quietly taking a chair, proceeded to take up the open book, little thinking it was this which engaged the thoughts of the soldier of Seventy-Six. The rustling of the leaves so near, startled him; and turning his head a little, he perceived me.

"That is a valuable periodical," said he.

I did not reply, for I verily thought the old gentleman was wandering a little. What in the world could he find in fashion plates and love tales, lace patterns and embroidery, to interest a mind like his?

"Are you a subscriber?" he added.

On my replying in the negative, he said—"Pray then, take this number, and read the article entitled '*Heroic Women of the Revolution*.' It has recalled vividly to my mind the scenes of former days, and for two hours I have been living in the camp and the battle-field. Why, I knew Deborah Samson as well as I know yourself. I was drill sergeant of the company to which she belonged, and gave her her first lessons in military discipline. A fine young fellow I thought her to be; and so did the mess to which she belonged, for she was quite a favorite among them. I remember her lively, animated countenance as if it were but yesterday she stood before me at drill."

The subject interested the speaker much; and he would have continued his conversation but for the interruption of visitors; and I reluctantly left.

My next call was upon a lady noted for her good housekeeping and refined taste—a most admirable union in a woman. The cool, darkened house seemed very refreshing after my long walk in the heated street. I passed into the dining-room, where sat a little girl some twelve or thirteen years of age. Her hair was smoothly combed; her dress clean, and neatly arranged, harmonizing well with the orderly appearance of the room. I knew her as a girl my friend had taken to aid her in the kitchen; indeed, she was at that time the only help she had. She rose very respectfully, gave me a seat, and left the room to call Mrs. P. I glanced at the book. It was open at "*Amelia*"—Miss Leslie's novel.

I expressed some surprise to my friend, when she entered, that, amid all her cares, she could give her help time to read "*The Lady's Book*."

"Why really," said she, "I know not how I could keep house without it. My husband reads it aloud to me while I sew evenings; and though he laughed when I proposed taking it, and said it seemed a foolish way to spend money, yet he finds enough in each number to pay the subscription. And as to Jane, though she is poor and dependent, nature has given her a good intellect and the pleasure of reading. '*The Lady's Book*' is to her, in prospective, like the land of Canaan to the Israelites—I have but to say, 'Do your work well and promptly, and you shall have an hour for reading it this afternoon,' and it is done with the dispatch and punctuality of the neatest housewife."

"Well, really, I have heard of charms and fairies in housekeeping; but this is quite a new way of oiling the wheels of the domestic machinery," said I.

An hour passed pleasantly away as we discussed the "*Book*," and the various methods to soften and

elevate the condition of the more dependent and less highly favored of our own sex.

Filled with better thoughts, I went on my way; but, recalling a request made to me a few days before by a widow, that I would furnish her some sewing, I concluded to take the opportunity while I was out, and engage her to make some fine shirts. I therefore soon found myself knocking at the door of a little brown house in a retired street. It was opened by a young girl who, after placing a chair for my accommodation, immediately seated herself and resumed her sewing. Mrs. L. was left a widow with four children and a blind grandmother to support. Her whole property, at the time of her husband's death, amounted, all told, to but three hundred dollars; but, with a spirit and energy that do honor to our sex, she determined to keep her family together, and, if possible, find means for their maintenance. And nobly thus far has she performed her task.

Sarah, a girl of eight, was taking charge of the youngest, a child of three years; while the mother and elder sister were plying their needles most assiduously: the old grandmother was knitting socks, habit and pliant fingers supplying the want of those sightless eyes. The son, a stout, sturdy boy of twelve, who worked for a farmer near, was now at home for a day or two, having hurt his foot with a scythe. As he sat with the injured limb resting upon a large, high footstool, I observed he had a book in his hand, and really I could not help smiling when I saw it was "The Lady's Book." But this time it was an old number, and borrowed. I beg your pardon, Mr. Godey, not exactly borrowed, but

my friend, on whom I made the last call, had voluntarily sent it in. Mrs. L. observed my glance, and said, pleasantly,

"It is quite a treat to have John at home for a day or two; he reads to us, and the girls say, and I think with them, that we can sew a great deal faster when listening to reading."

"It's such a nice book," said the grandmother; "why I forget my blindness and poverty for a little while. Johnny has been reading the drollest story I ever heard afore, and so like nater too. I should think the lady that wrote that 'Donation Party' had been visiting our place, or else there are more Parson Scrantums than one."

I could see that this beautiful monthly had been like a beam of sunlight to the inmates of the little brown house, and I inwardly blest it for its kind mission.

I returned home, determined to be a subscriber as soon as my husband should return from Boston, where business detained him a week or two. I must not forget to add that, a few days after these calls, as I sat at my sewing, with the porch-door open, I heard sounds as of a slow, heavy step, and the noise of a cane upon the steps. Looking up, I saw my venerable friend, the revolutionary soldier. He seated himself at my side, and immediately commenced talking about "Deborah Samson," and the scenes of the Revolution. For two or three hours I was a delighted listener, and no less gratified seemed the old gentleman in recalling the scenes of the past and the feats of his youth. And so I have ventured to give this little sketch, entitled to notice only for its *truth*



## ALLONDALE PRIORY.

BY J. F. OTIS.

(Concluded from page 43.)

### CHAPTER III.

WHEN the travelers reached London, Martin was soon made sensible that report, like other gossip, had aggravated the account of his master's diminished fortune; and that there were some persons who did not scruple to set him down as a ruined man. Whatever he might think or know, he was wise enough to hold his peace; and after transacting some pressing affairs, the hospitable mansion of Lord Tremayne received them for the few remaining weeks before Christmas: and here, on a similar visit, was Lady Emily Hayton. The long-absent lover's feelings were not the most pleasant when he found a very large party, all deeply engaged in the absorbing business of private theatricals. After the quiet and rational hours spent at the rectory, it was particularly irksome to find the day consumed in roars of laughter at unsuccessful attempts, or clamorous plaudits at more experienced acting.

With much to arrange in his own mind, and much to say of great importance to his future happiness, the man so soon to enter on the solemn obligations of marriage could ill brook the senseless folly which seemed wholly to possess every inmate of Tremayne House. He was by no means displeased that rumors of his poverty were very prevalent, nor that these should have very materially altered the manners of some who had heretofore called him friend; but he felt in his very heart a fear that there was a slight change in the looks of Lady Emily. Brought up, as she had been, in the very highest style of fashion, it might easily be supposed that a narrow establishment would not be consonant with her ideas of perfect felicity; but love—almighty love—generally throws all minor considerations into the background; and if she still loved, one so young would surely think but little of sordid dross. It could not be believed that she would.

There was a young nobleman in the party, the observed of all observers, the director of all amuse-

ments, the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the day; the man from whose decisions there was no appeal. He was not very handsome; he was not very learned—not even accomplished—but he was immensely rich; consequently, everything in the eyes of the mammas, and at the head of fashion, which rendered him an object of the greatest attraction in the estimation of the daughters; and this elevated being had taken the fancy to distinguish Lady Emily, whose importance was in consequence infinitely increased.

Suspense is the most agonizing attendant of any kind of acute feeling; the lover, therefore, resolved to know the worst—for that Lady Emily was changed, he could no longer conceal from himself. As he could not find an opportunity, he made it by requesting a few minutes' conversation while the rest were engaged in the rehearsal of an afterpiece in which she had no part, and of which she had declared herself very weary.

"My dear Emily," said he, producing an elegant portfolio, in which were six drawings mounted with rich borders of arabesque, "I am desirous of showing you some portions of the Northumbrian scenery; and Miss Egremont has, unconsciously, given me a sketch of the house in which we are to spend the greater portion of the year."

"Spend any part of the year in Northumberland!" exclaimed her ladyship, in accents of unfeigned surprise and consternation, "so far from London and from my friends?"

"Look at this view, and tell me if it is not worth going so far to see."

"It is very well. The house seems large. What are those buildings behind the trees?"

"They want repair, which shall be done the moment I am on the spot to superintend the work. I have had too much of trusting to other people."

"What is this square detached building? Could that be turned into a theatre?"

"Heavens! Emily, you make me shudder! That

in the chapel, where my ancestors have been buried for many centuries! But I hope we shall want no theatres; we shall have better amusement."

"Theatres now are quite indispensable," interrupted she, with some haste. "A common proverb cannot be acted in a room without losing half its effect."

"Do you think your gay friends will come so far to act for your amusement? The idea of a theatre in Northumberland borders on the ridiculous."

"Where my friends cannot come, I cannot reside!"

"My dearest Emily, I shall not at first be able to keep a very large establishment. Mismanagement on the part of my steward, has much diminished my income."

"So I have heard," said she, coldly; and, tossing back the drawings contemptuously, rose to leave the room.

"Is this to be my answer, Emily? Have you not said you could live with me anywhere?"

"That did not extend to Northumberland. No reasonable man would ask me to fix my residence three hundred miles from London!"

She left the room with an air of dignity, predetermined to consider herself an injured person.

This breach widened daily. The rich lord redoubled his attentions, and the lady graciously received them. The gentleman, not to seem a despairing lover, walked and talked with all the ladies indiscriminately, young and old. Among the latter was a shrewd-looking dowager, who surprised him, one day, by asking what he thought of Northumberland, of Mr. Egremont, and Mr. Egremont's daughters? On receiving an answer according to the impression of his grateful feelings, she nodded and said—"I am glad to hear all this. Mr. Egremont is my nephew."

"Your nephew, Lady Prescott! How is it, then, that the Miss Egremonts are left in such deep seclusion?"

"Because they are sensible girls and their father is a wise man. By your accounts, they are all of them discharging their most important duties. Now do not look as if you thought the fault to be mine. I have invited them often and pressingly, and have always received the same answer. Would you wish to see them in such society as this?"

An involuntary shudder was the only answer.

"And yet where will you find better? The beauty and fashion of the gay world! Mrs. Egremont, very beautiful, highly accomplished, and possessing an easy fortune, chose to follow her husband where his duty called him, and was contented to remain for his comfort and assistance. Her death was no common misfortune. Are these girls like her? Are they handsome?"

"I believe the world would think them eminently so."

"How do they dress, and what are their acquirements?"

"Their dress is marked by that simplicity and

neatness which must always be elegant. They are first-rate musicians; and as for their drawings, I will convince you by the sight of some I begged of them."

"Good! Proper amusements for the country; but I hope they are only amusements?"

"It appeared to me that they took up but very little of their time. They were actively employed in better things."

"Tell me, then," said Lady Prescott, with some appearance of anxiety, "how do they spend their hours and their fortune?—for they have a handsome income. Do they display much domestic elegance?"

"I should have judged, from their mode of life, that Mr. Egremont's stipend was not a large one. I can now account for the comfort of the cottages and the happiness of all around them. Those within their influence are so different from my own tenants, that I am impatient to get to Northumberland again to commence acting on their system."

"Will you have theatres there?"

"No."

"No racers?"

"Not one."

"Nor packs of stag hounds?"

"No; a few dogs only for use and companionship."

"Then who, my dear sir, do you expect will go with you or come after you?"

"If people are alarmed at my Utopian schemes and shun me, I must even go by myself."

"Go, then," said Lady Prescott, very significantly; "and may you prosper. One old woman will find you out, if it be only to see whether people can exist without making fools of themselves!"

To the trite saying, that "no man is a hero to his valet," may be added, "no woman is a heroine in her dressing-room," unless there should be some one more than her maid to witness her heroism. Waiting-women soon see into the depths of their ladies' characters and feelings; and, in spite of better resolutions, display their knowledge in the second room. Martin could neither be ignorant of what was going on, nor so silent before his master as he should have been; this, with the tattling of a few ladies, young and old—some from mischief, some from envy—precipitated affairs that otherwise might have taken up longer time.

"How much," said one, "Lord D—— is in love with Lady Emily Hayton!"

"How much," said another, "Lady Emily Hayton is in love with Lord V——! All former affairs seem forgotten!"

"I am sure she is right! Who would go to horrid Northumberland?"

"Oh! Northumberland would not be amiss—for a short time; but to marry a man who is *obliged* to live there!"

"Lord V—— has twenty palaces—palaces, I may say, besides his house in town—and such an income!"

"Ladies!" cried Lady Prescott, who accidentally heard some of these sayings, "Lady Emily Hayton

does very wisely to make up her mind not to go to Northumberland, for many cogent reasons. The principal one is, she would not be happy there, nor would she make others happy. She would get no good—she would do no good. But if she takes Lord V——, she may chance to find many houses, or even palaces, do not make happiness, any more than broad lands make riches."

It was of no use repeating this to Lady Emily, though many hastened to do it; her mind was already made up, and it required but little time or contrivance to bring on a crisis that ended in a total separation between these so lately firmly engaged lovers. All the letters, as well as every *gage d'amour*, were returned; they became as strangers, yet each delayed to depart, that the whole of the visitors might see how stoically they bore it. Lady Emily, to her real delight, was free to receive a regular offer of marriage from Lord V——; which, however, when there were no obstacles in the way, Lord V—— was in no haste to make—being one of those who have little scruple in breaking the tenth commandment, and, in fact, think lightly of any conquests unless they can be won from others; and, when that is once accomplished, lose all farther interest in them.

Lord Tremayne endeavored to remonstrate with both parties, but in vain. He was shocked with Lady Emily's conduct, but strove to palliate it. This was as useless as it was impolitic; and every word he uttered opened the eyes of the ill-used lover still wider. He saw plainly that it had been a systematic plan from the moment that it was believed his large fortune was impaired; and he could but rejoice in having escaped a heartless, mercenary woman of fashion.

A longer sojourn in London was now borne with great tranquillity; there was no need to fly on the wings of impatience or love. Business was quietly and leisurely transacted. Many packages were sent off to Northumberland, many more ordered to be sent. The beauties of that sublime district came over the imagination, peopled with happy images and some elegant ones. The blue mountains; the gleaming lakes; the fantastic rocks and sparkling waterfalls; the ruins; the noble castles; the primitive figures of the simple peasantry; a few classical figures, that might have been studies for the chisel of Canova, flitted in succession over the mind, and might probably bring a throb of enthusiasm to the heart. Everything combined to throw the soulless world of fashion to an immeasurable distance; and, to his infinite satisfaction, three weeks before Christmas, Mr. Eden was again established as a welcome guest at Mr. Egremont's quiet, simple, yet elegant rectory.

#### CHAPTER IV.

MR. EDEN was now quite at liberty to remark how very beautiful and graceful Elinor Egremont

looked and moved; how well she spoke on most subjects, without pretension or affectation. He could but remember that there were no faults in the person or manners of Lady Emily Hayton, and that, till an apparently richer man had appeared, how much her sentiments had assimilated with his own. He felt a void in his heart, but was in no haste to fill it. He enjoyed the present hours with a keen relish, and thought not of the future. He was to stay at the rectory a fortnight, with the express stipulation that the party, including Mr. and Mrs. Armytage, should spend the whole of what are called the holidays at his own house, whither Martin was frequently sent, to see if all needful preparations were going on.

Mr. Egremont was made acquainted with the deep disappointment Mr. Eden had experienced, and he sympathized with him on the mortification, but threw in hints that it was better for Lady Emily to have shown her real character before marriage than afterwards; and he could not help remarking that his young friend's manners were gayer, and his spirits more buoyant than when he thought himself a successful lover. He certainly had made a firm resolution never to bring a fine lady to live among the fells and forests, even if she professed herself, as Lady Emily had done, an enthusiastic admirer of the picturesque—and she really was so, of the very picturesque Regent's Park, Richmond Hill, &c.

The weather was unfavorable for exercise in the open air, and the small party were compelled to confine their amusements to the house, consequently were thrown more together. Yet Mr. Eden could not help acknowledging there would not have been one moment to throw away on theatricals. Indeed, the time was so well filled up, and flew so swiftly away, that Mr. Eden soon found other company, particularly that of Miss Armytage, was an unwelcome interruption to him. Not so to the sisters; they endured and even encouraged her, for they knew there was much good in her character, which they anxiously strove to bring forward, while they gently repressed all that was really evil. Mr. Eden wondered at their patience. He, however, tried to assist them; but soon discovered this to be a delicate task, as she was one of those unfortunate young ladies who can never divest themselves of the idea that gentlemen must fall in love with them perforce, whatever superior attractions may be before their eyes.

The quiet occupations of elegant country life are very favorable to the finer emotions of the heart, and Mr. Eden was fast lapsing into something like romance again, when his delightful dream was cruelly disturbed—he feared broken. A tall, handsome Northumbrian squire, with thousands of acres and a town-like castle, came on a short visit to Mr. Egremont—so he said; but it was easy to see that Elinor Egremont was the attraction. He saw no airs, no bustle, no blushes; all went on precisely as before, except that there could be neither reading, music, nor even drawing. Miss Armytage alone

was agitated and extremely restless, till she could get an opportunity of speaking apart to Mr. Eden, when she began, without hesitation or circumlocution—"Now is the time, sir, to show your friendship for Mr. Egremont's family."

"Only tell me how I can do it, Miss Armytage, and you will lay me under great obligation."

"Speak roundly to Elinor, Mr. Eden," said she, quivering with emotion; "do not spare her. Set her folly in its true light."

"What folly? How am I to speak? What am I to say?"

"Why, surely, you must know that this splendid Mr. Dacre absolutely sues to make her mistress of Dacre castle; that he has done so these twelve months, and that she flatly and absolutely refuses him."

"I certainly did not know it. But pray tell me, Miss Armytage, what has Mr. Dacre, independent of his castle and his numerous acres?"

"Oh! a fine parson; an ancient name; a good temper—in short, he is a great match. Mary is going to marry a poor parson only; but what an opportunity here is to raise the family."

"Do you think they need raising?"

"Why, no—not raising—but——. I believe I might have had Mr. Dacre myself at one time, but I look higher!" and she gave Mr. Eden one of those looks silly girls will sometimes give.

Mr. Eden tried to keep his temper, and answered, calmly, but very pointedly—

"If you look higher than Mr. Dacre, Miss Armytage, how high should Elinor Egremont look?—for I tell you, with the greatest sincerity, that in the circles of fashion—nay, in the British court—I have not seen one like her. And her noble rejection of wealth and name, because unaccompanied by mind and soul, raises her still higher in my eyes." Fearing he had gone too far, he continued, sportively—"When you have refused such a man, for such reasons, Miss Armytage, you will be very high, indeed, in my good opinion."

He left her abruptly, that she might not answer; and, with a lightened heart and a clear brow, sought the family in the music-room.

No one could admire or esteem unpretending excellence better than this young man, satiated, as he had been, with foreign frippery and the hollow-heartedness of English high breeding. Love could not be far off, when such a forcible contrast to all that is meritorious was hourly before his eyes. The sober piety of Mr. Egremont was as a beautiful frame, in which the solid acquirements and true elegances of his daughters were displayed to the greatest advantage. It would have been something to have gained a companion from such a house, even had the adornments been fewer and the beauties less. Mr. Eden's feelings, perhaps, had been more fully known to himself by the circumstance of Mr. Dacre's unpropitious visit; and he no longer delayed to ask Mr. Egremont to ask his daughter Elinor if she would help him to bring his own

tenants and people into something like the happy state of those who surrounded the rectory. Of his own feelings he did not speak; but they shone in a most eloquent pair of eyes; and though he did not receive a very decided answer, or even permission to speak to Elinor herself, he was not forbidden the chief aliment of love—hope. Mr. Egremont wisely required some time to know more of Mr. Eden's character in the world, before he would absolutely consent to trust the happiness of his daughter in his hands; and resolved to write to Lady Prescott, that he might know more particulars of Mr. Eden's former life than he would be willing of himself to avow.

Miss Armytage was all blank astonishment as soon as the secret transpired; but she consoled herself for Mr. Eden's most unaccountable perversion of taste, by the certainty of a present visit, and the remote prospect of being bridesmaid—that was the next thing to being a bride. After all, she comforted herself that Mr. Eden really did break his leg that he might fall in love and marry, though it was not with herself; it would have been out of all rules of romance, if such an accident had ended in nothing at all. She now began to appear more amiable in the eyes of her friends, for she condescended to talk common sense, since there was nothing to be got by folly; and the two tall dogs, to the great delight of the quiet family at the rectory, were suffered to repose in their respective kennels at home.

On the day appointed for visiting Mr. Eden, a plain, green chariot conveyed Elinor, Miss Armytage, and Mr. Eden; the rest of the party were in a post-chaise. As their road lay near Allondale Priory, it was proposed to rest the horses and look over some miniatures and medals, omitted on their former visit. So well had Martin foreseen this, that large fires were blazing in all the rooms; and the old housekeeper, no longer deaf, but very alert in waiting on the ladies, pressed on them refreshments before they again made the tour of the apartments, which now included a large gallery filled with works of art—some given reason about repairs having prevented their seeing it in their first excursion. Here the miniatures of Cooper and Oliver, with a cabinet of rare medals, detained them long.

On entering the saloon, Mr. Armytage was much interested with portraits of men he had personally known. He spoke highly of the ancestors of the Allondale family; and, pointing to the grandfather, said—"That was one of the first of men. His son, who hangs there, was not far behind him. He gave every promise of equaling his father; but, most unfortunately, died young. It was a great calamity."

"Any greater than an early death in one so gifted?" inquired Mr. Egremont.

"Yes, much more. Had his race ended with him, it would have been well; but he left one son, who has turned out a sad dog."

"A puppy, sir?" asked Mr. Eden, humorously.

"No, perhaps not exactly a puppy; but a sad dog, nevertheless. He was left one of the richest men

the three kingdoms; but London and Paris soon make a man poor! His own steward told me, not seven months ago, that the sums he remitted him were incredible, and it was like throwing them into the sea. There was still a cry for more, more! But now he said the estate could afford it no more. The sums, he said, were beyond all calculation, or, at least, credibility."

"Which sums," said Mr. Eden, quietly, "always traveled by a circuitous route, so as to find their way again into the said steward's pocket; for I have been informed, from the best authority, that he grew rich just in proportion as his master and the estate grew poor."

"That may be—it is too often the case. I have seen the stewards riding in carriages, while the tenants starved and the proprietors of the estates walked on foot. I have always taken care to be my own steward; and I think Annie will be somewhat the richer for it, especially now those good girls have brought her a little to her senses, or else it was all in some danger of going to found a hospital for romance-reading lunatics. I have always been my own steward."

"You are a wise man, sir; for the uncontrolled management of great wealth is a sore temptation to men of weak principles; and, it must be confessed, the Marquis of Allondale has been much to blame. He has been wrong as well as his steward."

"Wrong, sir? worse than wrong! Look at that man," said Mr. Armytage, pointing to the portrait of the old marquis; "tell me if he would have left a steward to the control and management of an estate like this? No. There is wisdom in every line of his face; and I had the proud satisfaction of calling that man my friend."

"I am inconceivably flattered, sir; for I think Miss Armytage fancied that I was somewhat like him."

"Not at all, sir. No man of the present day can be like him. Put on that flowing wig, and wear that ample vest and the velvet coat, and I will see if there is any likeness."

"By all means, Mr. Eden, put on the wig," said Mary Egremont; "and even I shall fancy you like. The same eyes, the slightly rising nose—"

"Pshaw!" cried Mr. Armytage, "that is the way with all your girls. Eyes and nose, forsooth! So the garments go for nothing. A man may change the fashion of his dress every day in the week, and you like him all the better."

"Is the young marquis handsome?" said Miss Armytage; "and will he come to reside here?"

"Handsome is that handsome does; and I am sure his actions are ugly enough. No, no; he will not dare to show his face here, even if it be handsome."

"I entreat you to remember, my dear sir," said Mr. Eden, very earnestly, "that the young man has not been long from under the control of his guardians, and only a year from his tour on the continent. Can he have had time to be so very bad?"

"I assure you, sir, I had it from his own steward. You may rely on it, he is a very sad dog."

"Yet I hope, Mr. Armytage, of the true English breed, without any foreign mixture; for, with all his faults on his devoted head—I am he!"

"You?" shrieked Miss Armytage; "you Marquis of Allondale? You!"—and she clung to her uncle's arm, not quite determined whether she should faint or go into hysterics, until she found no one heeded her, and she then became quite composed.

"Pardon me," said the marquis, bowing to Mr. Egremont, and taking a hand of each of the sisters, "pray, pardon me this seeming deception. I always travel under my family name of Eden. As I dislike "pomp and circumstance," it saves much trouble, and"—bowing to Mr. Armytage—"some expense, which my rich steward has made very necessary. I was too ill to undeceive you at first; and I was so delighted with your quiet hospitality to a nameless, or, at least, untitled traveler, that I continued the incognito. I hope you will not think worse of the Marquis of Allondale than you did of Mr. Eden, or believe any of the stories my nefarious steward circulated to cover his own villainy?"

"I am awake now!" cried Mr. Armytage; "I see it all—the double-faced, double-tongued villain! I hope I shall live to thrash him for his lies!"

"How quiet you all are," said Miss Armytage to the Egremonts; "this does not seem to move you at all."

"Why should it?" said Elinor. "What can a title add to Mr. Eden? We knew that he was a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian."

"My noble-minded Elinor," said the marquis, "you will then take it on you to assure Mr. Armytage that I am not quite such a 'sad dog' as my wicked steward would have had him believe; and beg him to continue to me the friendship he entertained for my excellent grandfather."

The old man's eyes ran over with tears.

"I will, I will!" cried he; "and if my whole fortune will enable you to get justice done you of that slanderous traitor, it is yours."

"I thank you, my dear sir; but I am richer than you would imagine. Six months away from the vortex of fashion, which engulfs a man and his money before he is aware of it, has done somewhat toward retrieving my fortune. Added to this, conscience alone has made the peculating, unjust steward refund more even than was demanded of him. All this, laid out on my impoverished estate, will yield me rich returns in wealth and happiness. And now, ladies—as we have no farther to go—if you wish to change your dresses before dinner, you will find apartments and attendants prepared for you."

At this moment, a traveling chariot, with four horses, dashed up to the hall door, and a lady's bonnet and veil were seen through the descending glass. Elinor turned pale, for she thought of Lady Emily and the marquis. She was struck with amazement at seeing Lady Prescott descending the steps, apparently much fatigued. She rallied in-

stantly, on seeing the party; and exclaimed, with much vivacity, "Did I not tell you, my lord, that one old woman would find you out, even in 'horrible Northumberland;' and a terrible journey it is. But, my dear nephew, I was resolved to answer your interesting letter in person, and to add my blessing to what rejoices my heart. When I found you all flown from the rectory, I followed you post-haste. And now, girls—my own girls—lead me to a room where I may rest an hour or two, for I promise you I am tired enough."

Miss Armytage was in perfect ecstasy with the splendor of the apartments newly furnished for their use. The velvet hangings; the long, low sofas; the cabinets and tables; the rich ornaments of the dressing-rooms, with the toilet-boxes of chased silver, occupied all her attention. But the sisters' hearts were too full to bestow a moment's thought on externals. They embraced, and wept long in each other's arms; but strove to fortify each other's mind for the high duties that were devolving on them. But Elinor could not rouse herself from her dreamy abstraction, till, on entering the dressing-room appointed for her use, she was struck with an exquisite portrait of the marquis in his robes of state.

"You are my witness, Mary, that it was Mr. Eden I loved, and not the marquis."

At Lady Prescott's request, Mr. Milner, the lover of Mary, was added to the party; and, as she declared her intention of dividing her property equally between her two grand-nieces, it was her wish that they should be married on the same day, and that not a very remote one. "I am old," said she, "and cannot remain long in this world; let me see as much human happiness as I can before I die." Mr. Egremont agreed to this, and stated his intention of resigning his living to Mr. Milner, that he might spend his remaining years in visiting his daughters and Lady Prescott.

The vicar and his family received invitations to the priory. The lady was astonished to find that neither the science of good eating nor the management of a house made any part of the conversation at the dinner-table; and that the sublimer mysteries of dress were never discussed in the drawing-room. The daughters were still more perplexed at there being neither feathers, flowers, ribbons, nor ringlets about the dress of any one, not even of Lady Prescott, who was fresh from the regions of fashion; that tapestry work was held in no esteem, and that even Miss Armytage, in some respects like themselves, disdained to quote from a novel, and would

not very readily allow that she indulged in reading one. When Mr. Egremont preached in the parish church, the vicar found he must rouse himself and shake off his sloth, or have his congregation go where they could hear such sermons.

Miss Armytage was the most incorrigible of all the party in her follies; but the humorous bluntness of Lady Prescott effected more than the united efforts of her uncle or the Egremont family had ever done. She laughed at her grimaces; begged to be spared when exaggerated sensibilities were to be played off; and whenever heroics or romance were coming on, she used to affect a slight degree of fear, crying out, "Now do, my dear, come down from your stilts!" adding, in a low voice, "You frighten all the gentlemen when you walk so high!" This was always a most effective caution, and was never known to fail of due effect.

It was thought that, if the marquis would but have adopted the wig, long waistcoat, and velvet coat in which his grandfather was portrayed, Mr. Armytage would never have been able to tear himself away from the priory, and that he would have made him his heir, to the exclusion of his still romantic niece. As it was, he made him sole guardian and residuary legatee, with a clause that his full consent was necessary to her marriage under penalty of forfeiture.

Lord V—— never made a tender of his hand to Lady Emily Hayton, who bitterly repented her folly when it was too late. After many similar disappointments, from having acquired the character of a mercenary woman, she married the son of a needy peer, and her husband became a pensioner on the bounties of government.

Honest John Powell was frequently a welcome and honored guest at the table of the Marquis of Allondale, all parties considering him the original link in the chain of circumstances that had produced so much present good and gave promise of future happiness.

The ivy-covered ruins were suffered to remain unaltered, except that the area was cleared of fallen stones, and the broken, connecting walls removed, so as to detach the whole from the main body of the building, thus forming a group of the most picturesque beauty. The chapel alone underwent thorough repair. The habitable part of the priory needed no addition; there was ample room for many friends; and the gay world, *blasé* with reiterated spectacles, sighed in vain for an invitation to introduce folly, vanity, or vice within its peaceful and hallowed walls.